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# SAINT PAULS.

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OCTOBER, 1871.

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## WILFRID CUMBERMEDE.

*An Autobiographical Story.*

By GEORGE MACDONALD, AUTHOR OF "ALEC FORBES," ETC.

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### CHAPTER XLIII.

#### THE SWORD IN THE SCALE.

THE next morning Charley and I went as usual to the library, where later in the day we were joined by the two ladies. It was long before our eyes once met, but when at last they did, Mary allowed hers to rest on mine for just one moment with an expression of dove-like beseeching, which I dared to interpret as meaning—"Be just to me." If she read mine, surely she read there that she was safe with my thoughts as with those of her mother.

Charley and I worked late in the afternoon, and went away in the last of the twilight. As we approached the gate of the park, however, I remembered I had left behind me a book I had intended to carry home for comparison with a copy in my possession of which the title-page was gone. I asked Charley therefore to walk on and give my man some directions about Lilith, seeing I had it in my mind to propose a ride on the morrow, while I went back to fetch it.

Finding the door at the foot of the stair leading to the open gallery ajar, and knowing that none of the rooms at either end of it were occupied, I went the nearest way, and thus entered the library at the point farthest from the more public parts of the house. The book I sought was however at the other end of the suite, for I had laid it on the window-sill of the room next the armoury.

As I entered that room, and while I crossed it towards the glimmering window, I heard voices in the armoury, and soon distinguished Clara's. It never entered my mind that possibly I ought



not to hear what might be said. Just as I reached the window, I was arrested, and stood stock-still: the other voice was that of Geoffrey Brotherton. Before my self-possession returned, I had heard what follows.

"I am certain *he* took it," said Clara. "I didn't see him, of course; but if you call at the Moat to-morrow, ten to one you will find it hanging on the wall."

"I knew him for a sneak, but never took him for a thief. I would have lost anything out of the house rather than that sword!"

"Don't you mention my name in it. If you do, I shall think you—well, I will never speak to you again."

"And if I don't, what then?"

Before I heard her answer, I had come to myself. I had no time for indignation yet. I must meet Geoffrey at once. I would not however have him know I had overheard any of their talk. It would have been more straightforward to allow the fact to be understood, but I shrunk from giving him occasion for accusing me of an eavesdropping of which I was innocent. Besides I had no wish to encounter Clara before I understood her game, which I need not say was a mystery to me. What end could she have in such duplicity? I had had unpleasant suspicions of the truth of her nature before, but could never have suspected her of baseness.

I stepped quietly into the further room, whence I returned, making a noise with the door-handle, and saying—

"Are you there, Miss Coningham? Could you help me to find a book I left here?"

There was silence; but after the briefest pause I heard the sound of her dress as she swept hurriedly out into the gallery. I advanced. On the top of the steps, filling the doorway of the armoury in the faint light from the window, appeared the dim form of Brotherton.

"I beg your pardon," I said. "I heard a lady's voice, and thought it was Miss Coningham's."

"I cannot compliment your ear," he answered. "It was one of the maids. I had just rung for a light. I presume you are Mr. Cumbermede."

"Yes," I answered. "I returned to fetch a book I forgot to take with me. I suppose you have heard what we've been about in the library here?"

"I have been partially informed of it," he answered stiffly. "But I have heard also that you contemplate a raid upon the armoury. I beg you will let the weapons alone."

I had said something of the sort to Clara that very morning.

"I have a special regard for them," he went on; "and I don't want them meddled with. It's not every one knows how to handle them. Some amongst them I would not have injured for their weight

in diamonds. One in particular I should like to give you the history of—just to show you that I am right in being careful over them.—Here comes the light!”

I presume it had been hurriedly arranged between them as Clara left him that she should send one of the maids, who in consequence now made her appearance with a candle. Brotherton took it from her and approached the wall.

“Why! What the devil! Some one has been meddling already, I find! The very sword I speak of is gone! There’s the sheath hanging empty! What *can* it mean? Do you know anything of this, Mr. Cumbermede?”

“I do, Mr. Brotherton. The sword to which that sheath belongs is *mine*. I have it.”

“*Yours!*” he shouted; then restraining himself, added in a tone of utter contempt—“This is rather too much. Pray, sir, on what grounds do you lay claim to the smallest atom of property within these walls? My father ought to have known what he was about when he let you have the run of the house! And the old books too! By heaven, it’s too much! I always thought——”

“It matters little to me what you think, Mr. Brotherton—so little that I do not care to take any notice of your insolence——”

“Insolence!” he roared, striding towards me, as if he would have knocked me down.

I was not his match in strength, for he was at least two inches taller than I, and of a coarse-built, powerful frame. I caught a light rapier from the wall, and stood on my defence.

“Coward!” he cried.

“There are more where this came from,” I answered, pointing to the wall.

He made no move towards arming himself, but stood glaring at me in a white rage.

“I am prepared to prove,” I answered as calmly as I could, “that the sword to which you allude, is mine. But I will give *you* no explanation. If you will oblige me by asking your father to join us, I will tell him the whole story.”

“I will have a warrant out against you.”

“As you please. I am obliged to you for mentioning it. I shall be ready. I have the sword, and intend to keep it. And by the way, I had better secure the scabbard as well,” I added, as with a sudden spring I caught it also from the wall, and again stood prepared.

He ground his teeth with rage. He was one of those who, trusting to their superior strength, are not much afraid of a row, but cannot face cold steel: soldier as he had been, it made him nervous.

“Insulted in my own house!” he snarled from between his teeth.

"Your father's house," I corrected. "Call him, and I will give explanations."

"Damn your explanations! Get out of the house, you puppy; or I'll have the servants up and have you ducked in the horse-pond."

"Bah!" I said. "There's not one of them would lay hands on me at your bidding. Call your father, I say, or I will go and find him myself."

He broke out in a succession of oaths, using language I had heard in the streets of London, but nowhere else. I stood perfectly still, and watchful. All at once, he turned and went into the gallery, over the balustrade of which he shouted—

"Martin! Go and tell my father to come here—to the armoury—at once. Tell him there's a fellow here out of his mind."

I remained quiet, with my scabbard in one hand, and the rapier in the other—a dangerous weapon enough, for it was, though slight, as sharp as a needle, and I knew it for a bit of excellent temper. Brotherton stood outside waiting for his father. In a few moments, I heard the voice of the old man.

"Boys! boys!" he cried; "What is all this to-do?"

"Why, sir," answered Geoffrey, trying to be calm, "here's that fellow Cumbermede confesses to having stolen the most valuable of the swords out of the armoury—one that's been in the family for two hundred years, and says he means to keep it."

I just caught the word *liar* ere it escaped my lips: I would spare the son in his father's presence.

"Tut! tut!" said Sir Giles. "What does it all mean? You're at your old quarrelsome tricks, my boy! Really you ought to be wiser by this time!"

As he spoke, he entered panting, and with the rubicund glow beginning to return upon a face from which the message had evidently banished it.

"Tut! tut!" he said again, half starting back as he caught sight of me with the weapon in my hand—"What is it all about, Mr. Cumbermede? I thought *you* had more sense!"

"Sir Giles," I said, "I have not confessed to having stolen the sword—only to having taken it."

"A very different thing," he returned, trying to laugh. "But come now; tell me all about it. We can't have quarrelling like this, you know. We can't have pot-house work here."

"That is just why I sent for you Sir Giles," I answered, replacing the rapier on the wall. "I want to tell you the whole story."

"Let's have it then."

"Mind I don't believe a word of it," said Geoffrey.

"Hold your tongue, sir," said his father sharply.

"Mr. Brotherton," I said, "I offered to tell the story to Sir Giles—not to you."

"You offered!" he sneered. "You may be compelled—under different circumstances by and by, if you don't mind what you're about."

"Come now—no more of this!" said Sir Giles.

Thereupon I began at the beginning, and told him the story of the sword, as I have already given it to my reader. He fidgeted a little, but Geoffrey kept himself stock-still during the whole of the narrative. As soon as I had ended Sir Giles said—

"And you think poor old Close actually carried off your sword!—Well, he was an odd creature, and had a passion for everything that could kill. The poor little atomy used to carry a poniard in the breast-pocket of his black coat—as if anybody would ever have thought of attacking his small carcass! Ha! ha! ha! He was simply a monomaniac in regard of swords and daggers. There, Geoffrey! The sword is plainly his. *He* is the wronged party in the matter, and we owe him an apology."

"I believe the whole to be a pure invention," said Geoffrey, who now appeared perfectly calm.

"Mr. Brotherton!" I began, but Sir Giles interposed.

"Hush! hush!" he said, and turned to his son. "My boy, you insult your father's guest."

"I will at once prove to you, sir, how unworthy he is of any forbearance, not to say protection from you. Excuse me for one moment."

He took up the candle, and opening the little door at the foot of the winding stair, disappeared. Sir Giles and I sat in silence and darkness until he returned, carrying in his hand an old vellum-bound book.

"I daresay you don't know this manuscript, sir," he said, turning to his father.

"I know nothing about it," answered Sir Giles. "What is it? Or what has it to do with the matter in hand?"

"Mr. Close found it in some corner or other, and used to read it to me when I was a little fellow. It is a description, and in most cases a history as well, of every weapon in the armoury. They had been much neglected, and a great many of the labels were gone, but those which were left referred to numbers in the book heading descriptions which corresponded exactly to the weapons on which they were found. With a little trouble he had succeeded in supplying the numbers where they were missing, for the descriptions are very minute."

He spoke in a tone of perfect self-possession.

"Well, Geoffrey, I ask again, what has all this to do with it?" said his father.

"If Mr. Cumbermede will allow you to look at the label attached to the sheath in his hand, for fortunately it was a rule with Mr. Close

to put a label on both sword and sheath, and if you will read me the number, I will read you the description in the book."

I handed the sheath to Sir Giles, who began to decipher the number on the ivory ticket.

"The label is quite a new one," I said.

"I have already accounted for that," said Brotherton. "I will leave it to yourself to decide whether the description corresponds."

Sir Giles read out the number, figure by figure, adding—

"But how are we to test the description? I don't know the thing, and it's not here."

"It is at the Moat," I replied; "but its future place is at Sir Giles's decision."

"Part of the description belongs to the scabbard you have in your hand, sir," said Brotherton. "The description of the sword itself I submit to Mr. Cumbermede."

"Till the other day I never saw the blade," I said.

"Likely enough," he retorted dryly, and proceeding, read the description of the half-basket hilt, inlaid with gold, and the broad blade, channeled near the hilt, and inlaid with ornaments and initials in gold.

"There is nothing in all that about the scabbard," said his father.

"Stop till we come to the history," he replied, and read on, as nearly as I can recall, to the following effect. I have never had an opportunity of copying the words themselves.

"This sword seems to have been expressly forged for Sir ——," (He read it *Sir So and So*.) "'whose initials are to be found on the blade. According to tradition, it was worn by him, for the first and only time, at the battle of Naseby, where he fought in the cavalry led by Sir Marmaduke Langdale. From some accident or other, Sir —— found, just as the order to charge was given, that he could not draw his sword, and had to charge with only a pistol in his hand. In the flight which followed, he pulled up, and unbuckled his sword, but while attempting to ease it, a rush of the enemy startled him, and, looking about, he saw a roundhead riding straight at Sir Marmaduke, who that moment passed in the rear of his retiring troops—giving some directions to an officer by his side, and unaware of the nearness of danger. Sir —— put spurs to his charger, rode at the trooper, and dealt him a downright blow on the pot-helmet with his sheathed weapon. The fellow tumbled from his horse, and Sir —— found his scabbard split halfway up, but the edge of his weapon unturned. It is said he vowed it should remain sheathed for ever.'—The person who has now unsheathed it," added Brotherton, "has done a great wrong to the memory of a loyal cavalier."

"The sheath halfway split was as familiar to my eyes as the face of my uncle," I said, turning to Sir Giles. "And in the only reference

I ever heard my great-grandmother make to it, ~~she~~ mentioned the name of Sir Marmaduke. I recollect that ~~much~~ perfectly."

"But how could the sword be there ~~and~~ here at one and the same time?" said Sir Giles.

"*That* I do not pretend to explain," I said.

"Here at least is written testimony to our possession of it," said Brotherton in a ~~conclusive~~ tone.

"How then are we ~~to~~ explain Mr. Cumbermede's story?" said Sir Giles, evidently ~~in~~ good faith.

"With ~~that~~ I cannot consent to allow myself concerned.—Mr. Cumbermede is, I am told, a writer of fiction."

"Geoffrey," said Sir Giles, "behave yourself like a gentleman."

"I endeavour to do so," he returned with a sneer.

I kept silence.

"How can you suppose," the old man went on, "that Mr. Cumbermede would invent such a story? What object could he have?"

"He may have a mania for weapons like old Close—as well as for old books," he replied.

I thought of my precious folio. But I did not yet know how much additional force his insinuation with regard to the motive of my labours in the library would gain if it should be discovered that such a volume was in my possession.

"You may have remarked, sir," he went on, "that I did not read the name of the owner of the sword in any place where it occurred in the manuscript."

"I did. And I beg to know why you kept it back," answered Sir Giles.

"What do you think the name might be, sir?"

"How should I know? I am not an antiquarian."

"Sir *Wilfrid Cumbermede*. You will find the initials on the blade.—Does that throw any light on the matter, do you think, sir?"

"Why that is your very own name!" cried Sir Giles, turning to me.

I bowed.

"It is a pity the sword shouldn't be yours."

"It *is* mine, Sir Giles—though, as I said, I am prepared to abide by your decision."

"And now I remember"—the old man resumed, after a moment's thought—"the other evening Mr. Alderforge—a man of great learning, Mr. Cumbermede—told us that the name of Cumbermede had at one time belonged to our family. It is all very strange. I confess I am utterly bewildered."

"At least you can understand, sir, how a man of imagination, like Mr. Cumbermede here, might desire to possess himself of a weapon which bears his initials, and belonged two hundred years ago to a

baronet of the same name as himself—a circumstance which, notwithstanding it is by no means a common name, is not *quite* so strange as at first sight appears—that is, if all reports are true.”

I did not in the least understand his drift; neither did I care to inquire into it now.

“Were you aware of this, Mr. Cumbermede?” asked his father.

“No, Sir Giles,” I answered.

“Mr. Cumbermede has had the run of the place for weeks. I am sorry I was not at home. This book was lying all the time on the table in the room above, where poor old Close’s work-bench and polishing-wheel are still standing.”

“Mr. Brotherton, this gets beyond bearing,” I cried. “Nothing but the presence of your father, to whom I am indebted for much kindness, protects you.”

“Tut! tut!” said Sir Giles.

“Protects me, indeed!” exclaimed Brotherton. “Do you dream I should be by any code bound to accept a challenge from you?—Not, at least, I presume to think, before a jury had decided on the merits of the case.”

My blood was boiling, but what could I do or say? Sir Giles rose, and was about to leave the room, remarking only—

“I don’t know what to make of it.”

“At all events, Sir Giles,” I said hurriedly, “you will allow me to prove the truth of what I have asserted. I cannot, unfortunately, call my uncle or aunt, for they are gone; and I do not know where the servant who was with us when I took the sword away, is now. But, if you will allow me, I will call Mrs. Wilson—to prove that I had the sword when I came to visit her on that occasion, and that on the morning after sleeping here I complained of its loss to her, and went away without it.”

“It would but serve to show the hallucination was early developed. We should probably find that even then you were much attracted by the armoury,” said Brotherton, with a judicial air, as if I were a culprit before a magistrate.

I had begun to see that, although the old man was desirous of being just, he was a little afraid of his son. He rose as the latter spoke, however, and going into the gallery, shouted over the balustrade—

“Some one send Mrs. Wilson to the library.”

We removed to the reading-room, I carrying the scabbard which Sir Giles had returned to me as soon as he had read the label. Brotherton followed, having first gone up the little turnpike stair, doubtless to replace the manuscript.

Mrs. Wilson came, looking more pinched than ever, and stood before Sir Giles with her arms straight by her sides, like one of the ladies of Noah’s ark. I will not weary my reader with a full report of the examination. She had seen me *with* a sword, but had taken

no notice of its appearance. I *might* have taken it from the armoury, for I *was* in the library all the afternoon. She had left me there thinking I was a "gentlemanly" boy. I had *said* I had lost it, but she was sure *she* did not know how that could be. She was *very* sorry she had caused any trouble by asking me to the house, but Sir Giles would be pleased to remember that he had himself introduced the boy to her notice. Little she thought, &c., &c.

In fact the spiteful creature, propitiating her natural sense of justice by hinting instead of plainly suggesting injurious conclusions, was paying me back for my imagined participation in the impertinences of Clara. She had besides, as I learned afterwards, greatly resented the trouble I had caused of late.

Brotherton struck in as soon as his father had ceased questioning her.

"At all events, if he believed the sword was his, why did he not go and represent the case to you, sir, and request justice from you? Since then he has had opportunity enough. His tale has taken too long to hatch."

"This is all very paltry," I said.

"Not so paltry as your contriving to sleep in the house in order to carry off your host's property in the morning—after studying the place to discover which room would suit your purpose best!"

Here I lost my presence of mind. A horror shook me lest something might come out to injure Mary, and I shivered at the thought of her name being once mentioned along with mine. If I had taken a moment to reflect, I must have seen that I should only add to the danger by what I was about to say. But her form was so inextricably associated in my mind with all that had happened then, that it seemed as if the slightest allusion to any event of that night would inevitably betray her; and in the tremor which, like an electric shock, passed through me from head to foot, I blurted out words importing that I had never slept in the house in my life.

"Your room was got ready for you, anyhow, Master Cumbermede," said Mrs. Wilson.

"It does not follow that I occupied it," I returned.

"I can prove that false," said Brotherton; but probably lest he should be required to produce his witness, only added,—"*At all events, he was seen in the morning, carrying the sword across the court before any one had been admitted.*"

I was silent; for I now saw too clearly that I had made a dreadful blunder, and that any attempt to carry assertion further, or even to explain away my words, might be to challenge the very discovery I would have given my life to ward off.

As I continued silent, steeling myself to endure, and saying to myself that disgrace was not dishonour, Sir Giles again rose, and turned to leave the room. Evidently he was now satisfied that I was unworthy of confidence.



"One moment, if you please, Sir Giles," I said. "It is plain to me there is some mystery about this affair, and it does not seem as if I should be able to clear it up. The time may come, however, when I can. I did wrong, I see now, in attempting to right myself, instead of representing my case to you. But that does not alter the fact that the sword was and is mine, however appearances may be to the contrary. In the meantime, I restore you the scabbard, and as soon as I reach home, I shall send my man with the disputed weapon."

"It will be your better way," he said, as he took the sheath from my hand.

Without another word, he left the room. Mrs. Wilson also retired. Brotherton alone remained. I took no further notice of him, but followed Sir Giles through the armoury. He came after me, step for step, at a little distance, and as I stepped out into the gallery, said, in a tone of insulting politeness—

"You will send the sword as soon as may be quite convenient, Mr. Cumbermede? Or shall I send and fetch it?"

I turned and faced him in the dim light which came up from the hall.

"Mr. Brotherton, if you knew that book and those weapons as early as you have just said, you cannot help knowing that at that time the sword was *not* there."

"I decline to reopen the question," he said.

A fierce word leaped to my lips, but repressing it I turned away once more, and walked slowly down the stair, across the hall, and out of the house.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

### I PART WITH MY SWORD.

I MADE haste out of the park, but wandered up and down my own field for half-an-hour, thinking in what shape to put what had occurred before Charley. My perplexity arose not so much from the difficulty involved in the matter itself, as from my inability to fix my thoughts. My brain was for the time like an ever-revolving kaleidoscope, in which however there was but one fair colour—the thought of Mary. Having at length succeeded in arriving at some conclusion, I went home, and would have despatched Styles at once with the sword, had not Charley already sent him off to the stable, so that I must wait.

"What *has* kept you so long, Wilfrid?" Charley asked as I entered.

"I've had a tremendous row with Brotherton," I answered.

"The brute! Is he there? I'm glad I was gone. What was it all about?"

"About that sword. It was very foolish of me to take it without saying a word to Sir Giles."

"So it was," he returned. "I can't think how *you* could be so foolish!"

I could, well enough. What with the dream and the waking, I could think little about anything else ; and only since the consequences had overtaken me, saw how unwisely I had acted. I now told Charley the greater part of the affair—omitting the false step I had made in saying I had not slept in the house ; and also, still with the vague dread of leading to some discovery, omitting to report the treachery of Clara ; for, if Charley should talk to her or Mary about it, which was possible enough, I saw several points where the danger would lie very close. I simply told him that I had found Brotherton in the armoury, and reported what followed between us. I did not at all relish having now in my turn secrets from Charley, but my conscience did not trouble me about it, seeing it was for his sister's sake ; and when I saw the rage of indignation into which he flew, I was, if possible, yet more certain I was right. I told him I must go and find Styles that he might take the sword at once ; but he started up, saying he would carry it back himself, and at the same time take his leave of Sir Giles, whose house of course he could never enter again after the way I had been treated in it. I saw this would lead to a rupture with the whole family, but I should not regret that, for there could be no advantage to Mary either in continuing her intimacy, such as it was, with Clara, or in making further acquaintance with Brotherton. The time of their departure was also close at hand, and might be hastened without necessarily involving much of the unpleasant. Also, if Charley broke with them at once, there would be the less danger of his coming to know that I had not given him all the particulars of my discomfiture : if he were to find I had told a falsehood, how could I explain to him why I had done so ? This arguing on probabilities, made me feel like a culprit who has to protect himself by concealment ; but I will not dwell upon my discomfort in the half-duplicity thus forced upon me. I could not help it. I got down the sword, and together we looked at it for the first and last time. I found the description contained in the book perfectly correct. The upper part was inlaid with gold in a Greekish pattern crossed by the initials W.C. I gave it up to Charley with a sigh of submission to the inevitable, and having accompanied him to the park-gate, roamed my field again until his return.

He rejoined me in a far quieter mood, and for a moment or two I was silent with the terror of learning that he had become acquainted with my unhappy blunder. After a little pause, he said—

“ I'm very sorry I didn't see Brotherton. I should have liked just a word or two with him.”

“ It's just as well not,” I said. “ You would only have made another row. Didn't you see any of them ? ”

“ I saw the old man. He seemed really cut up about it, and professed great concern. He didn't even refer to you by name—and spoke only in general terms. I told him you were incapable of what

was laid to your charge ; that I had not the slightest doubt of your claim to the sword,—your word being enough for me—and that I trusted time would right you. I went too far there however, for I haven't the slightest hope of anything of the sort."

"How did he take all that?"

"He only smiled—incredulously and sadly,—so that I couldn't find it in my heart to tell him all my mind. I only insisted on my own perfect confidence in you.—I'm afraid I made a poor advocate, Wilfrid. Why should I mind his gray hairs where justice was concerned ? I am afraid I was false to you, Wilfrid."

"Nonsense ; you did just the right thing, old boy. Nobody could have done better."

"Do you think so ? I am so glad ! I have been feeling ever since as if I ought to have gone into a rage, and shaken the dust of the place from my feet for a witness against the whole nest of them ! But somehow I couldn't—what with the honest face and the sorrowful look of the old man."

"You are always too much of a partizan, Charley ; I don't mean so much in your actions—for this very one disproves that—but in your notions of obligation. You forget that you had to be just to Sir Giles as well as to me, and that he must be judged—not by the absolute facts of the case, but by what appeared to him to be the facts. He could not help misjudging me. But you ought to help misjudging him. So you see your behaviour was guided by an instinct or a soul, or what you will, deeper than your judgment."

"That may be—but he ought to have known you better than believe you capable of misconduct."

"I don't know that. He had seen very little of me. But I dare say he puts it down to kleptomania. I think he will be kind enough to give the ugly thing a fine name for my sake. Besides he must hold either by his son or by me."

"That's the worst that can be said on my side of the question. He must by this time be aware that that son of his is nothing better than a low scoundrel."

"It takes much to convince a father of such an unpleasant truth as that, Charley."

"Not much, if my experience goes for anything."

"I trust it is not typical, Charley."

"I suppose you're going to stand up for Geoffrey next ?"

"I have no such intention. But if I did, it would be but to follow your example. We seem to change sides every now and then. You remember how you used to defend Clara when I expressed my doubts about her."

"And wasn't I right ? Didn't you come over to my side ?"

"Yes, I did," I said, and hastened to change the subject ; adding, "As for Geoffrey, there is room enough to doubt whether he believes

what he says, and that makes a serious difference. In thinking over the affair since you left me, I have discovered further grounds for questioning his truthfulness."

"As if that were necessary!" he exclaimed with an accent of scorn.—"But tell me what you mean," he added.

"In turning the thing over in my mind, this question has occurred to me.—He read from the manuscript, that on the blade of the sword near the hilt, were the initials of Wilfrid Cumbermede. Now, if the sword had never been drawn from the scabbard, how was that to be known to the writer?"

"Perhaps it was written about that time," said Charley.

"No; the manuscript was evidently written some considerable time after. It refers to tradition concerning it."

"Then the writer knew it by tradition."

The moment Charley's logical faculty was excited, his perception was impartial.

"Besides," he went on, "it does not follow that the sword had really never been drawn before. Mr. Close even may have done so, for his admiration was apparently quite as much for weapons themselves as for their history. Clara could hardly have drawn it as she did, if it had not been meddled with before."

The terror lest he should ask me how I came to carry it home without the scabbard, hurried my objection.

"That supposition, however, would only imply that Brotherton might have learned the fact from the sword itself, not from the book. I should just like to have one peep of the manuscript to see whether what he read was all there?"

"Or any of it, for that matter," said Charley. "Only it would have been a more tremendous risk than I think he would have run."

"I wish I had thought of it sooner, though."

My suspicion was that Clara had examined the blade thoroughly, and given him a full description of it. He *might*, however, have been at the Hall on some previous occasion, without my knowledge, and might have seen the half-drawn blade on the wall, examined it, and pushed it back into the sheath; which might have so far loosened the blade, that Clara was afterwards able to draw it herself. I was all but certain by this time that it was no other than she that had laid it on my bed. But then why had she drawn it? Perhaps that I might leave proof of its identity behind me—for the carrying out of her treachery, whatever the object of it might be. But this opened a hundred questions not to be discussed, even in silent thought, in the presence of another.

"Did you see your mother, Charley?" I asked.

"No. I thought it better not to trouble her. They are going to-morrow. Mary had persuaded her—why, I don't know—to return a day or two sooner than they had intended."

"I hope Brotherton will not succeed in prejudicing them against me."

"I wish that were possible," he answered. "But the time for prejudice is long gone by."

I could not believe this to be the case in respect of Mary; for I could not but think her favourably inclined to me.

"Still," I said, "I should not like their bad opinion of me to be enlarged as well as strengthened by the belief that I had attempted to steal Sir Giles's property. You *must* stand my friend there, Charley."

"Then you *do* doubt me, Wilfrid?"

"Not a bit, you foolish fellow."

"You know, I can't enter that house again, and I don't care about writing to my mother, for my father is sure to see it; but I will follow my mother and Mary the moment they are out of the grounds to-morrow, and soon see whether they've got the story by the right end."

The evening passed with me in alternate fits of fierce indignation and profound depression, for, while I was clear to my own conscience in regard of my enemies, I had yet thrown myself bound at their feet by my foolish lie; and I all but made up my mind to leave the country, and only return after having achieved such a position—of what sort I had no more idea than the school-boy before he sets himself to build a new castle in the air—as would buttress any assertion of the facts I might see fit to make in after years.

When we had parted for the night, my brains began to go about, and the centre of their gyration was not Mary now, but Clara. What could have induced her to play me false? All my vanity, of which I had enough, was insufficient to persuade me that it could be out of revenge for the gradual diminution of my attentions to her. She had seen me pay none to Mary, I thought, except she had caught a glimpse from the next room of the little passage of the ring, and that I did not believe. Neither did I believe she had ever cared enough about me to be jealous of whatever attentions I might pay to another. But in all my conjectures, I had to confess myself utterly foiled. I could imagine no motive. Two possibilities alone, both equally improbable, suggested themselves—the one, that she did it for pure love of mischief, which, false as she was to me, I could not believe; the other, which likewise I rejected, that she wanted to ingratiate herself with Brotherton. I had still, however, scarcely a doubt that she had laid the sword on my bed. Trying to imagine a connection between this possible action and Mary's mistake, I built up a conjectural form of conjectural facts to this effect—that Mary had seen her go into my room; had taken it for the room she was to share with her, and had followed her either at once—in which case I supposed Clara to have gone out by the stair to the roof to avoid being seen—

or afterwards, from some accident, without a light in her hand. But I do not care to set down more of my speculations, for none concerning this either were satisfactory to myself, and I remain almost as much in the dark to this day. In any case the fear remained that Clara must be ever on the borders of the discovery of Mary's secret, if indeed she did not know it already, which was a dreadful thought—more especially as I could place no confidence in her. I was glad to think, however, that they were to be parted so soon, and I had little fear of any correspondence between them.

The next morning Charley set out to waylay them at a certain point on their homeward journey. I did not propose to accompany him. I preferred having him speak for me first, not knowing how much they might have heard to my discredit, for it was far from probable the matter had been kept from them. After he had started however, I could not rest, and for pure restlessness sent Styles to fetch my mare. The loss of my sword was a trifle to me now, but the proximity of the place where I should henceforth be regarded as what I hardly dared to realize, was almost unendurable. As if I had actually been guilty of what was laid to my charge, I longed to hide myself in some impenetrable depth, and kept looking out impatiently for Styles's return. At length I caught sight of my Lilith's head rising white from the hollow in which the farm lay, and ran up to my room to make a little change in my attire. Just as I snatched my riding-whip from a hook by the window, I spied a horseman approaching from the direction of the park gates. Once more it was Mr. Coningham, riding hitherward from the windy trees. In no degree inclined to meet him, I hurried down the stair, and arriving at the very moment Styles drew up, sprung into the saddle, and would have galloped off in the opposite direction, confident that no horse of Mr. Coningham's could overtake my Lilith. But the moment I was in the saddle, I remembered there was a pile of books on the window-sill of my uncle's room, belonging to the library at the Hall, and I stopped a moment to give Styles the direction to take them home at once, and, having asked a word of Miss Pease, to request her, with my kind regards, to see them safely deposited amongst the rest. In consequence of this delay, just as I set off at full speed from the door, Mr. Coningham rode round the corner of the house.

"What a devil of a hurry you are in, Mr. Cumbermede!" he cried. "I was just coming to see you. Can't you spare me a word?"

I was forced to pull up, and reply as civilly as might be.

"I am only going for a ride," I said, "and will go part of your way with you if you like."

"Thank you. That will suit me admirably. I am going Gastford way. Have you ever been there?"

"No," I answered. "I have only just heard the name of the village."

"It is a pretty place. But there's the oddest old church you ever saw, within a couple of miles of it—alone in the middle of a forest—or at least it was a forest not long ago. It is mostly young trees now. There isn't a house within a mile of it, and the nearest stands as lonely as the church—quite a place to suit the fancy of a poet like you! Come along and see it. You may as well go one way as another, if you only want a ride."

"How far is it?" I asked.

"Only seven or eight miles across country: I can take you all the way through lanes and fields."

Perplexed or angry I was always disinclined for speech; and it was only after things had arranged themselves in my mind, or I had mastered my indignation, that I would begin to feel communicative. But something prudential inside warned me that I could not afford to lose any friend I had; and although I was not prepared to confide my wrongs to Mr. Coningham, I felt I might some day be glad of his counsel.

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## CHAPTER XLV.

### UMBERDEN CHURCH.

My companion chatted away, lauded my mare, asked if I had seen Clara lately, and how the library was getting on. I answered him carelessly, without even a hint at my troubles.

"You seem out of spirits, Mr. Cumbermede," he said. "You've been taking too little exercise. Let's have a canter. It will do you good. Here's a nice bit of sward."

I was only too ready to embrace the excuse for dropping a conversation towards which I was unable to contribute my share.

Having reached a small roadside inn, we gave our horses a little refreshment; after which, crossing a field or two by jumping the stiles, we entered the loveliest lane I had ever seen. It was so narrow that there was just room for horses to pass each other, and covered with the greenest sward rarely trodden. It ran through the midst of a wilderness of tall hazels. They stood up on both sides of it, straight and trim as walls, high above our heads as we sat on our horses; and the lane was so serpentine, that we could never see further than a few yards ahead; while, towards the end, it kept turning so much in one direction that we seemed to be following the circumference of a little circle. It ceased at length at a small double-leaved gate of iron, to which we tied our horses before entering the churchyard. But instead of a neat burial-place, which the whole approach would have given us to expect, we found a desert. The grass was of extraordinary coarseness, and mingled with quantities of vile-looking weeds.







**"WILFRID CUMBERMEDE."**

Several of the graves had not even a spot of green upon them, but were mere heaps of yellow earth in huge lumps, mixed with large stones. There was not above a score of graves in the whole place, two or three of which only had gravestones on them. One lay open with the rough yellow lumps all about it, and completed the desolation. The church was nearly square—small, and shapeless, with but four latticed windows, two on one side, one in the other, and the fourth in the east end. It was built partly of bricks and partly of flint stones, the walls bowed and bent, and the roof waved and broken. Its old age had gathered none of the graces of age to soften its natural ugliness, or elevate its insignificance. Except a few lichens, there was not a mark of vegetation about it. Not a single ivy leaf grew on its spotted and wasted walls. It gave a hopeless, pagan expression to the whole landscape—for it stood on a rising ground from which we had an extensive prospect of height and hollow, cornfield and pasture and wood, away to the dim blue horizon.

"You don't find it enlivening, do you—eh?" said my companion.

"I never saw such a frightfully desolate spot," I said, "to have yet the appearance of a place of Christian worship. It looks as if there were a curse upon it. Are all those the graves of suicides and murderers? It cannot surely be consecrated ground."

"It's not nice," he said. "I didn't expect you to like it. I only said it was odd."

"Is there any service held in it?" I asked.

"Yes—once a fortnight or so. The rector has another living a few miles off."

"Where can the congregation come from?"

"Hardly from anywhere. There ain't generally more than five or six, I believe. Let's have a look at the inside of it."

"The windows are much too high, and no foothold."

"We'll go in."

"Where can you get the key? It must be a mile off at least by your own account. There's no house nearer than that, you say."

He made me no reply, but going to the only flat gravestone, which stood on short thick pillars, he put his hand beneath it, and drew out a great rusty key.

"Country lawyers know a secret or two," he said.

"Not always much worth knowing," I rejoined,—“if the inside be no better than the outside.”

"We'll have a look anyhow," he said, as he turned the key in the dry lock.

The door snarled on its hinges and disclosed a space drearier certainly, and if possible uglier than its promise.

"Really, Mr. Coningham," I said, "I don't see why you should have brought me to look at this place."

"It answered for a bait, at all events. You've had a good long

ride, which was the best thing for you. Look what a wretched little vestry that is!"

It was but a corner of the east end, divided off by a faded red curtain.

"I suppose they keep a parish register here," he said. "Let's have a look."

Behind the curtain hung a dirty surplice and a gown. In the corner stood a desk like the schoolmaster's in a village school. There was a shelf with a few vellum-bound books on it, and nothing else, not even a chair, in the place.

"Yes; there they are!" he said, as he took down one of the volumes from the shelf. "This one comes to a close in the middle of the last century. I dare say there is something in this now that would be interesting enough to somebody. Who knows how many properties it might make change hands?"

"Not many, I should think. Those matters are pretty well seen to now."

"By some one or other—not always the rightful heirs. Life is full of the strangest facts, Mr. Cumbermede. If I were a novelist now, like you, my experience would make me dare a good deal more in the way of invention than any novelist I happen to have read. Look there, for instance!"

He pointed to the top of the last page, or, rather, the last half of the cover. I read as follows:

"MARRIAGES, 1748.

"Mr. Wilfrid Cumbermede Daryll, of the Parish of ——— second son of Sir Richard Daryll of Moldwarp Hall in the County of ——— and Mistress Elizabeth Woodruffe were married by a license Jan<sup>y</sup>. 15."

"I don't know the name of Daryll," I said.

"It was your own great-grandfather's name," he returned. "I happen to know that much."

"You knew this was here, Mr. Coningham," I said. "That is why you brought me."

"You are right. I did know it. Was I wrong in thinking it would interest you?"

"Certainly not. I am obliged to you. But why this mystery? Why not have told me what you wanted me to go for."

"I will why you in turn. Why should I have wanted to show you now more than any other time what I have known for as many years almost as you have lived? You spoke of a ride—why shouldn't I give a direction to it that might pay you for your trouble? And why shouldn't I have a little amusement out of it if I pleased? Why shouldn't I enjoy your surprise at finding in a place you had hardly heard of and would certainly count most uninteresting, the record of a fact that concerned your own existence so nearly? There!"

"I confess it interests me more than you will easily think—inasmuch as it seems to offer to account for things that have greatly puzzled me for some time. I have of late met with several hints of a connection at one time or other between the Moat and the Hall, but these hints were so isolated that I could weave no theory to connect them. Now I dare say they will clear themselves up."

"Not a doubt of that, if you set about it in earnest."

"How did he come to drop his surname?"

"That has to be accounted for."

"It follows—does it not?—that I am of the same blood as the present possessors of Moldwarp Hall?"

"You are—but the relation is not a close one," said Mr. Coningham.

"Sir Giles was but distantly related to the stock of which you come."

"Then—but I must turn it over in my mind. I am rather in a maze."

"You have got some papers at the Moat?" he said—interrogatively.

"Yes; my friend Osborne has been looking over them. He found out this much—that there was once some connection between the Moat and the Hall, but at a far earlier date than this points to, or any of the hints to which I just now referred. The other day when I dined at Sir Giles's, Mr. Alderforge said that Cumbermede was a name belonging to Sir Giles's ancestry—or something to that effect; but that again could have had nothing to do with those papers, or with the Moat at all."

Here I stopped, for I could not bring myself to refer to the sword. It was not merely that the subject was too painful: of all things I did not want to be cross-questioned by my lawyer-companion.

"It is not amongst those you will find anything of importance, I suspect. Did your great-grandmother—the same, no doubt, whose marriage is here registered—leave no letters or papers behind her?"

"I've come upon a few letters. I don't know if there is anything more."

"You haven't read them, apparently."

"I have not. I've been always going to read them, but I haven't opened one of them yet."

"Then I recommend you—that is, if you care for an interesting piece of family history—to read those letters carefully, that is constructively."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean—putting two and two together, and seeing what comes of it; trying to make everything fit into one, you know."

"Yes. I understand you. But how do you happen to know that those letters contain a history, or that it will prove interesting when I have found it?"

"All family history ought to be interesting—at least to the last of

his race," he returned, replying only to the latter half of my question. "It must, for one thing, make him feel his duty to his ancestors more strongly."

"His duty to marry, I suppose you mean?" I said with some inward bitterness. "But to tell the truth, I don't think the inheritance worth it in my case."

"It might be better," he said, with an expression which seemed odd beside the simplicity of the words.

"Ah! you think then to urge me to make money; and for the sake of my dead ancestors increase the inheritance of those that may come after me? But I believe I am already as diligent as is good for me—that is in the main, for I have been losing time of late."

"I meant no such thing, Mr. Cumbermede. I should be very doubtful whether any amount of success in literature would enable you to restore the fortunes of your family."

"Were they so very ponderous, do you think? But in truth I have little ambition of that sort. All I will readily confess to is a strong desire not to shirk what work falls to my share in the world."

"Yes," he said, in a thoughtful manner—"if one only knew what his share of the work was."

The remark was unexpected, and I began to feel a little more interest in him.

"Hadn't you better take a copy of that entry?" he said.

"Yes—perhaps I had. But I have no materials."

It did not strike me that attorneys do not usually, like excise-men, carry about an ink-bottle, when he drew one from the breast-pocket of his coat, along with a folded sheet of writing-paper, which he opened and spread out on the desk. I took the pen he offered me, and copied the entry.

When I had finished, he said—

"Leave room under it for the attestation of the parson. We can get that another time, if necessary. Then write, 'Copied by me'—and then your name and the date. It may be useful some time. Take it home and lay it with your grandmother's papers."

"There can be no harm in that," I said, as I folded it up, and put it in my pocket. "I am greatly obliged to you for bringing me here, Mr. Coningham. Though I am not ambitious of restoring the family to a grandeur of which every record has departed, I am quite sufficiently interested in its history, and shall consequently take care of this document."

"Mind you read your grandmother's papers, though," he said.

"I will," I answered.

He replaced the volume on the shelf, and we left the church; he locked the door and replaced the key under the gravestone; we mounted our horses, and after riding with me about half the way to the Moat,

he took his leave at a point where our roads diverged. I resolved to devote that very evening, partly in the hope of distracting my thoughts, to the reading of my grandmother's letters.

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## CHAPTER XLVI.

## MY FOLIO.

WHEN I reached home I found Charley there, as I had expected.

But a change had again come over him. He was nervous, restless, apparently anxious. I questioned him about his mother and sister. He had met them as planned, and had, he assured me, done his utmost to impress them with the truth concerning me. But he had found his mother incredulous, and had been unable to discover from her how much she had heard; while Mary maintained an obstinate silence, and, as he said, looked more stupid than usual. He did not tell me that Clara had accompanied them so far, and that he had walked with her back to the entrance of the park. This I heard afterwards. When we had talked a while over the sword-business—for we could not well keep off it long—Charley seeming all the time more uncomfortable than ever, he said, perhaps merely to turn the talk into a more pleasant channel—

“By the way, where have you put your folio? I've been looking for it ever since I came in, but I can't find it. A new reading started up in my head the other day, and I want to try it both with the print and the context.”

“It's in my room,” I answered. “I will go and fetch it.”

“We will go together,” he said.

I looked where I thought I had laid it, but there it was not. A pang of foreboding terror invaded me. Charley told me afterwards that I turned as white as a sheet. I looked everywhere, but in vain; ran and searched my uncle's room, and then Charley's, but still in vain; and at last, all at once, remembered with certainty that two nights before I had laid it on the window-sill in my uncle's room. I shouted for Styles, but he was gone home with the mare, and I had to wait, in little short of agony, until he returned. The moment he entered, I began to question him.

“You took those books home, Styles?” I said, as quietly as I could, anxious not to startle him, lest it should interfere with the just action of his memory.

“Yes, sir. I took them at once, and gave them into Miss Pease's own hands;—at least I suppose it was Miss Pease. She wasn't a young lady, sir.”

“All right, I daresay. How many were there of them?”

“Six, sir.”

“I told you five,” I said, trembling with apprehension and wrath.

"You said four or five, and I never thought but the six were to go. They were all together on the window-sill."

I stood speechless. Charley took up the questioning.

"What sized books were they?" he asked.

"Pretty biggish—one of them quite a large one—the same I've seen you, gentlemen, more than once, putting your heads together over. At least it looked like it."

Charley started up and began pacing about the room. Styles saw he had committed some dreadful mistake, and began a blundering expression of regret, but neither of us took any notice of him, and he crept out in dismay.

It was some time before either of us could utter a word. The loss of the sword was a trifle to this. Beyond a doubt the precious tome was now lying in the library of Moldwarp Hall—amongst old friends and companions, possibly—where years on years might elapse before one loving hand would open it, or any eyes gaze on it with reverence.

"Lost, Charley!" I said at last—"Irrecoverably lost!"

"I will go and fetch it," he cried, starting up. "I will tell Clara to bring it out to me. It is beyond endurance this. Why should you not go and claim what both of us can take our oath to as yours?"

"You forget, Charley, how the sword-affair cripples us—and how the claiming of this volume would only render their belief with regard to the other the more probable. You forget too that I *might* have placed it in the chest first, and above all, that the name on the title-page is the same as the initials on the blade of the sword,—the same as my own."

"Yes—I see it won't do. And yet if I were to represent the thing to Sir Giles?—He doesn't care for old books——"

"You forget, again, Charley, that the volume is of great money-value. Perhaps my late slip has made me fastidious—but though the book be mine—and if I had it, the proof of the contrary would lie with them—I could not take advantage of Sir Giles' ignorance to recover it."

"I might however get Clara—she is a favourite with him, you know——"

"I will not hear of it," I said, interrupting him, and he was forced to yield.

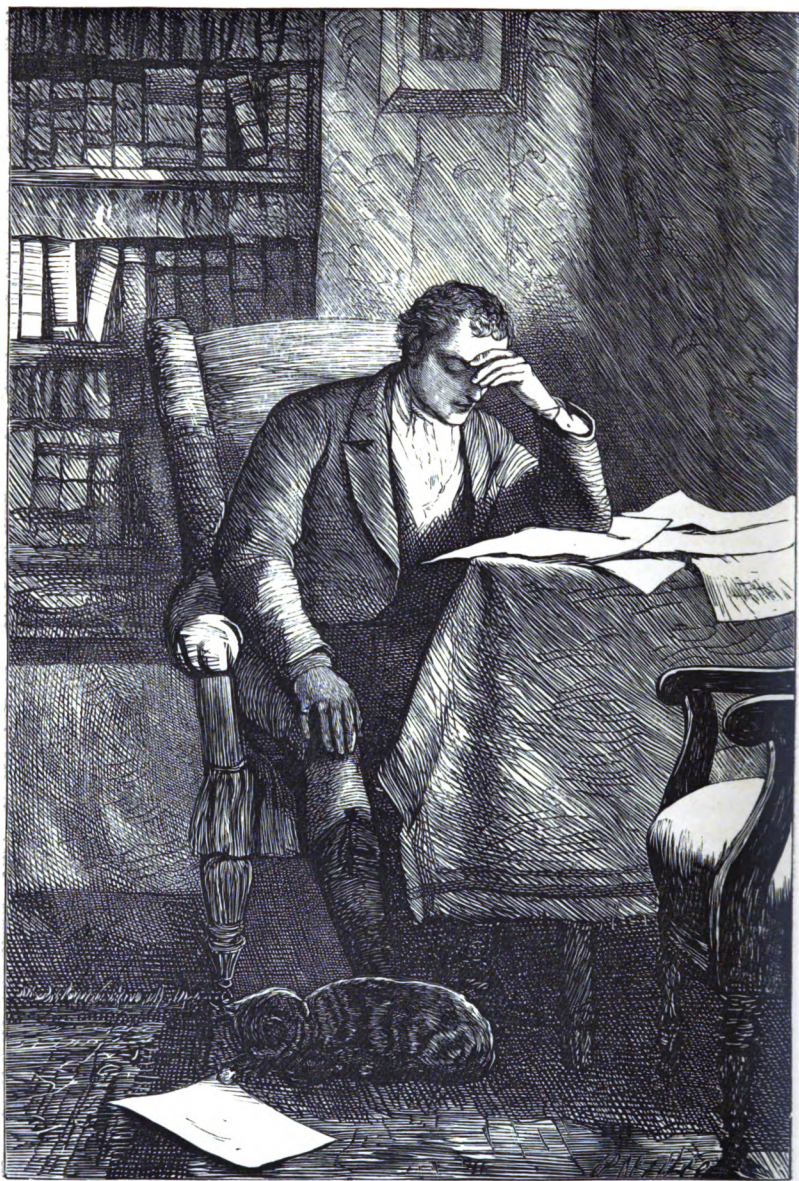
"No, Charley," I said again; "I must just bear it. Harder things *have* been borne, and men have got through the world and out of it notwithstanding. If there isn't another world, why should we care much for the loss of what *must* go with the rest?—and if there is, why should we care at all?"

"Very fine, Wilfrid! but when you come to the practice—why, the less said the better."

"But that is the very point: we don't come to the practice. If we did, then the ground of it would be proved unobjectionable."







**"WILFRID CUMBERMEDE."**

"True ;—but if the practice be unattainable——"

"It would take much proving to prove that to my—*dissatisfaction* I should say ; and more failure besides, I can tell you, than there will be time for in this world. If it were proved, however—don't you see it would disprove both suppositions equally ? If such a philosophical spirit be unattainable, it discredits both sides of the alternative on either of which it would have been reasonable."

"There is a sophism there of course, but I am not in the mood for pulling your logic to pieces," returned Charley, still pacing up and down the room.

In sum, nothing would come of all our talk but the assurance that the volume was equally irrecoverable with the sword, and indeed with my poor character—at least in the eyes of my immediate neighbours.

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## CHAPTER XLVII.

### THE LETTERS AND THEIR STORY.

As soon as Charley went to bed, I betook myself to my grandmother's room, in which, before discovering my loss, I had told Styles to kindle a fire. I had said nothing to Charley about my ride, and the old church, and the marriage-register. For the time, indeed, I had almost lost what small interest I had taken in the matter—my new bereavement was so absorbing and painful ; but feeling certain when he left me, that I should not be able to sleep, but would be tormented all night by innumerable mental mosquitoes if I made the attempt, and bethinking me of my former resolution, I proceeded to carry it out.

The fire was burning brightly, and my reading lamp was on the table, ready to be lighted. But I sat down first in my grandmother's chair and mused for I know not how long. At length my wandering thoughts rehearsed again the excursion with Mr. Coningham. I pulled the copy of the marriage-entry from my pocket, and in reading it over again, my curiosity was sufficiently roused to send me to the bureau. I lighted my lamp at last, unlocked what had seemed to my childhood a treasury of unknown marvels, took from it the packet of yellow withered letters, and sat down again by the fire to read, in my great-grandmother's chair, the letters of Wilfrid Cumberland Daryll—for so he signed himself in all of them—my great grandfather. There were amongst them a few of her own in reply to his—badly written and badly spelt, but perfectly intelligible. I will not transcribe any of them—I have them to show if needful—but not at my command at the present moment ;—for I am writing neither where I commenced my story—on the outskirts of an ancient city, nor at the Moat, but in a dreary old square in London ; and those

letters lie locked again in the old bureau, and have lain unvisited through thousands of desolate days and slow creeping nights, in that room which I cannot help feeling sometimes as if the ghost of that high-spirited, restless-hearted grandmother of mine must now and then revisit, sitting in the same old chair, and wondering to find how far it has all receded from her—wondering also to think what a work she made, through her long and weary life, about things that look to her now such trifles.

I do not then transcribe any of the letters, but give, in a connected form, what seem to me the facts I gathered from them; not hesitating to present, where they are required, self-evident conclusions as if they were facts mentioned in them. I repeat that none of my names are real, although they all point at the real names.

Wilfrid Cumbermede was the second son of Richard and Mary Daryll of Moldwarp Hall. He was baptized Cumbermede from the desire to keep in memory the name of a celebrated ancestor, the owner in fact of the disputed sword—itself alluded to in the letters,—who had been more mindful of the supposed rights of his king than the next king was of the privations undergone for his sake, for Moldwarp Hall at least was never recovered from the roundhead branch of the family into whose possession it had drifted. In the change, however, which creeps on with new generations, there had been in the family a reaction of sentiment in favour of the more distinguished of its progenitors; and Richard Daryll, a man of fierce temper and overbearing disposition, had named his son after the cavalier. A tyrant in his family, at least in the judgment of the writers of those letters, he apparently found no trouble either with his wife or his eldest or youngest son; while, whether his own fault or not, it was very evident that from Wilfrid his annoyances had been numerous.

A legal feud had for some time existed between the Ahab of Moldwarp Hall and the Naboth of the Moat, the descendant of an ancient yeoman family of good blood, and indeed related to the Darylls themselves, of the name of Woodruffe. Sir Richard had cast covetous eyes upon the field surrounding Stephen's comparatively humble abode, which had at one time formed a part of the Moldwarp property. In searching through some old parchments, he had found, or rather, I suppose, persuaded himself he had found sufficient evidence that this part of the property of the Moat, then of considerable size, had been willed away in contempt of the entail which covered it, and belonged by right to himself and his heirs. He had therefore instituted proceedings to recover possession, during the progress of which their usual bickerings and disputes augmented in fierceness. A decision having at length been given in favour of the weaker party, the mortification of Sir Richard was unendurable to himself, and his wrath and unreasonableness in consequence, equally unendurable to his family. One may then imagine the paroxysm of rage with which he was

seized when he discovered that, during the whole of the legal process, his son Wilfrid had been making love to Elizabeth Woodruffe, the only child of his enemy. In Wilfrid's letters, the part of the story which follows is fully detailed for Elizabeth's information, of which the reason is also plain—that the writer had spent such a brief period afterwards in Elizabeth's society, that he had not been able for very shame to recount the particulars.

No sooner had Sir Richard come to a knowledge of the hateful fact, evidently through one of his servants, than, suppressing the outburst of his rage for the moment, he sent for his son Wilfrid, and informed him, his lips quivering with suppressed passion, of the discovery he had made; accused him of having brought disgrace on the family, and of having been guilty of falsehood and treachery; and ordered him to go down on his knees and abjure the girl before heaven, or expect a father's vengeance.

But evidently Wilfrid was as little likely as any man to obey such a command. He boldly avowed his love for Elizabeth, and declared his intention of marrying her. His father, foaming with rage, ordered his servants to seize him. Overmastered in spite of his struggles, he bound him to a pillar, and taking a horse-whip, lashed him furiously; then, after his rage was thus in a measure appeased, ordered them to carry him to his bed. There he remained, hardly able to move, the whole of that night and the next day. On the following night, he made his escape from the Hall, and took refuge with a farmer-friend a few miles off—in the neighbourhood, probably, of Umberden Church.

Here I would suggest a conjecture of my own—namely, that my ancestor's room was the same I had occupied, so—fatally, shall I say?—to myself, on the only two occasions on which I had slept at the Hall; that he escaped by the stair to the roof, having first removed the tapestry from the door, as a memorial to himself and a sign to those he left; that he carried with him the sword and the volume—both probably lying in his room at the time, and the latter little valued by any other. But all this, I repeat, is pure conjecture.

As soon as he was sufficiently recovered, he communicated with Elizabeth, prevailed upon her to marry him at once at Umberden Church, and within a few days, as near as I could judge, left her to join, as a volunteer, the army of the Duke of Cumberland, then fighting the French in the Netherlands. Probably from a morbid fear lest the disgrace his father's brutality had inflicted should become known in his regiment, he dropped the surname of Daryll when he joined it; and—for what precise reasons I cannot be certain—his wife evidently never called herself by any other name than Cumbermede. Very likely she kept her marriage a secret, save from her own family, until the birth of my grandfather, which certainly took place before her husband's return. Indeed I am almost sure that he never returned from that campaign, but died fighting, not unlikely a t

Laffeldt ; and that my grannie's letters, which I found in the same packet, had been, by the kindness of some comrade, restored to the young widow.

When I had finished reading the letters, and had again thrown myself back in the old chair, I began to wonder why nothing of all this should ever have been told me. That the whole history should have dropt out of the knowledge of the family, would have been natural enough, had my great-grandmother, as well as my great-grandfather, died in youth ; but that she should have outlived her son, dying only after I, the representative of the fourth generation, was a boy at school, and yet no whisper have reached me of these facts, appeared strange. A moment's reflection showed me that the causes and the reasons of the fact must have lain with my uncle. I could not but remember how both he and my aunt had sought to prevent me from seeing my grannie alone, and how the last had complained of this in terms far more comprehensible to me now than they were then. But what could have been the reasons for this their obstruction of the natural flow of tradition ? They remained wrapt in a mystery which the outburst from it of an occasional gleam of conjectural light only served to deepen.

The letters lying open on the table before me, my eyes rested upon one of the dates—the third day of March, 1747. It struck me that this date involved a discrepancy with that of the copy I had made from the register. I referred to it, and found my suspicion correct. According to the copy, my ancestors were not married until the 15th of January, 1748. I must have made a blunder—and yet I could hardly believe I had, for I had reason to consider myself accurate. If there *was* no mistake, I should have to reconstruct my facts, and draw fresh conclusions.

By this time, however, I was getting tired and sleepy and cold ; my lamp was nearly out ; my fire was quite gone ; and the first of a frosty dawn was beginning to break in the east. I rose and replaced the papers, reserving all further thought on the matter for a condition of circumstances more favourable to a correct judgment. I blew out the lamp, groped my way to bed in the dark, and was soon fast asleep, in despite of insult, mortification, perplexity, and loss.

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## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### ONLY A LINK.

It may be said of the body in regard of sleep as well as in regard of death, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power." For me, the next morning, I could almost have said, "I was sown in dishonour and raised in glory." No one can deny the power of the wearied body to paralyze the soul ; but I have a correlate theory which I love,

and which I expect to find true—that, while the body wearies the mind, it is the mind that restores vigour to the body, and then, like the man who has built him a stately palace, rejoices to dwell in it. I believe that, if there be a living, conscious love at the heart of the universe, the mind, in the quiescence of its consciousness in sleep, comes into a less disturbed contact with its origin, the heart of the creation; whence gifted with calmness and strength for itself, it grows able to impart comfort and restoration to the weary frame. The cessation of labour affords but the necessary occasion; makes it possible, as it were, for the occupant of an outlying station in the wilderness to return to his father's house for fresh supplies of all that is needful for life and energy. The child-soul goes home at night, and returns in the morning to the labours of the school. Mere physical rest could never of its own negative self build up the frame in such light and vigour as come through sleep.

It was from no blessed vision that I woke the next morning, but from a deep and dreamless sleep. Yet the moment I became aware of myself and the world, I felt strong and courageous, and I began at once to look my affairs in the face. Concerning that which was first in consequence, I soon satisfied myself: I could not see that I had committed any serious fault in the whole affair. I was not at all sure that a lie in defence of the innocent, and to prevent the knowledge of what no one had any right to know, was wrong—seeing such involves no injustice on the one side, and does justice on the other. I have seen reason since to change my mind, and count my liberty restricted to silence—not extending, that is, to the denial or assertion of what the will of God, inasmuch as it exists or does not exist, may have declared to be or not to be fact. I now think that to lie is, as it were, to snatch the reins out of God's hand.

At all events, however, I had done the Brothertons no wrong. "What matter then," I said to myself, "of what they believe me guilty, so long as before God and my own conscience I am clear and clean?"

Next came the practical part:—What was I to do? To right myself either in respect of their opinion, or in respect of my lost property, was more hopeless than important, and I hardly wasted two thoughts upon that. But I could not remain where I was, and soon came to the resolution to go with Charley to London at once, and taking lodgings in some obscure recess near the inns of court, there to give myself to work and work alone, in the foolish hope that one day fame might buttress reputation. In this resolution I was more influenced by the desire to be near the brother of Mary Osborne, than the desire to be near my friend Charley, strong as that was: I expected thus to hear of her oftener, and even cherished the hope of coming to hear from her—of inducing her to honour me with a word or two of immediate communication. For

I could see no reason why her opinions should prevent her from corresponding with one who, whatever might or might not seem to him true, yet cared for the truth, and must treat with respect every form in which he could descry its predominating presence.

I would have asked Charley to set out with me that very day but for the desire to clear up the discrepancy between the date of my ancestor's letters, all written within the same year, and that of the copy I had made of the registration of their marriage—with which object I would compare the copy and the original. I wished also to have some talk with Mr. Coningham concerning the contents of the letters which at his urgency I had now read. I got up and wrote to him therefore, asking him to ride with me again to Umberden Church, as soon as he could make it convenient, and sent Styles off at once on the mare to carry the note to Minstercombe and bring me back an answer.

As we sat over our breakfast, Charley said suddenly—

"Clara was regretting yesterday that she had not seen the Moat. She said you had asked her once, but had never spoken of it again."

"And now I suppose she thinks, because I'm in disgrace with her friends at the Hall, that she mustn't come near me," I said with another bitterness than belonged to the words.

"Wilfrid!" he said reproachfully; "She didn't say anything of the sort. I will write and ask her if she couldn't contrive to come over. She might meet us at the park gates."

"No," I returned; "there isn't time. I mean to go back to London—perhaps to-morrow evening. It is like turning you out, Charley, but we shall be nearer each other in town than we were last time."

"I am delighted to hear it," he said. "I had been thinking myself that I had better go back this evening. My father is expected home in a day or two, and it would be just like him to steal a march on my chambers. Yes, I think I shall go to night."

"Very well, old boy," I answered. "That will make it all right. It's a pity we couldn't take the journey together, but it doesn't matter much. I shall follow you as soon as I can."

"Why can't you go with me?" he asked.

Thereupon I gave him a full report of my excursion with Mr. Coningham, and the after reading of the letters, with my reason for wishing to examine the register again; telling him that I had asked Mr. Coningham to ride with me once more to Umberden Church.

When Styles returned, he informed me that Mr. Coningham at first proposed to ride back with him, but probably bethinking himself that another sixteen miles would be too much for my mare, had changed his mind and sent me the message that he would be with me early the next day.

After Charley was gone, I spent the evening in a thorough search



of the old bureau. I found in it several quaint ornaments besides those already mentioned, but only one thing which any relation to my story, would justify specific mention of—namely an ivory label, discoloured with age, on which was traceable the very number Sir Giles had read from the scabbard of Sir Wilfrid's sword. Clearly then my sword was the one mentioned in the book, and as clearly it had not been at Moldwarp Hall for a long time before I lost it there. If I were in any fear as to my reader's acceptance of my story, I should rejoice in the possession of that label more than in the restoration of sword or book; but amidst all my troubles, I have as yet been able to rely upon her justice and her knowledge of myself. Yes—I must mention one thing more I found—a long, sharp-pointed, straight-backed, snake-edged, Indian dagger, inlaid with silver—a fierce, dangerous, almost venomous looking weapon, in a curious case of old green morocco. It also may have once belonged to the armoury of Moldwarp Hall. I took it with me when I left my grannie's room, and laid it in the portmanteau I was going to take to London.

My only difficulty was what to do with Lilith; but I resolved for the meantime to leave her, as before, in the care of Styles, who seemed almost as fond of her as I was myself.

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## NEWS FROM HERSCHEL'S PLANET.

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SATURN—the *altissimus planeta* of the ancients—remains still the most distant planet respecting whose physical condition astronomers can obtain satisfactory information. The most powerful telescopes yet constructed have been turned in vain towards those two mighty orbs which circle outside the path of distant Saturn: from beyond the vast depths which separate us from Uranus and Neptune, telescopists can obtain little intelligence respecting the physical habitudes of either planet. Nor need we be surprised at the failure of astronomers, when we consider the difficulties under which the inquiry has been conducted. In comparing the telescopic aspect of Uranus with that of Saturn (for example) we must remember that Uranus is not only twice as far from the earth but also twice as far from the sun as Saturn is. So that the features of Uranus are not merely reduced in seeming dimensions, in the proportion of about one to four, but they are less brilliantly illuminated in the same proportion. And therefore (roughly) any given portion of the surface of Uranus—say a hundred miles square near the middle of his visible disc—sends to us but about one-sixteenth part of the light which an equal and similarly-placed portion of the surface of Saturn would send to us. Now every astronomer knows how difficult it is, even with very powerful telescopes, to study the physical features of Saturn. A telescope of moderate power will show us his ring-system and some of his satellites; but to study the belts which mark his surface, the aspect of his polar regions, and in particular those delicate tints which characterise various portions of his disc, requires a telescope of great power. It will be understood, therefore, that in the case of Uranus, which receives so much less light from the sun and is so much farther from us, even the best telescopes yet made by man must fail to reveal any features of interest. We may add also that Uranus is a much smaller planet than Saturn, though far larger than the combined volume of all the four planets, Mars, Venus, the Earth, and Mercury. If Saturn (without his rings) and Uranus were both visible together in the same telescopic field (a circumstance which may from time to time happen) the Herschelien planet would appear so small and faint that it might readily be taken for one of Saturn's moons, the ringed planet sending us altogether some sixty times as much light as Uranus.

But what the telescope had hitherto failed to accomplish, has just

been achieved by means of that wonderful ally of the telescope, the spectroscope, in the able hands of the eminent astronomer and physicist, Dr. Huggins. News has been received about the constitution of the atmosphere of Uranus, and news so strange (apart from the strangeness of the mere fact that any information could be gained at all respecting a vaporous envelope so far away) as to lead us to speculate somewhat curiously respecting the conditions under which the Uranians, if there are any, have their being.

Before describing the results of Dr. Huggins's late study of the planet, it may be well to give a brief account of what is known or may be surmised respecting Uranus. The question has been raised whether Uranus was known to the astronomers of old times. There is nothing altogether improbable in the supposition that in countries where the skies are unusually clear, the planet might have been detected by its motions. Even in our latitudes Uranus can be quite readily seen on clear and moonless nights, when favourably situated. He shines at such times as a star of about the fifth magnitude—that is somewhat more brightly than the faintest stars visible to the naked eye. In the clear skies of more southerly latitudes he would appear a sufficiently conspicuous object, though, of course, it would be wholly impossible for even the most keen-sighted observer to recognise any difference between the aspect of the planet and that of a star of equal brightness. The steadiness of the light of Saturn causes this planet to present a very marked contrast with the first magnitude stars whose lustre nearly equals his own. But although the stars of the lower orders of magnitude scintillate like the leading orbs, their scintillations are not equally distinguishable by the unaided eye. Nor is it unlikely that if Uranus were carefully watched (without telescopic aid) he would appear to scintillate slightly. Uranus would only be recognisable as a planet by his movements. There seems little reason for doubting, however, that even the motions of so faint a star might have been recognised by some of the ancient astronomers, whose chief occupation consisted in the actual study of the star groups. We might thus understand the Burmese tradition that there are eight planets, the sun, the moon, Mercury, Venus, Jupiter, and Saturn, and another named Ráhu which is invisible. If Uranus was actually discovered by ancient astronomers, it seems far from unlikely that the planet was only discovered to be lost again, and perhaps within a very short time. For if anything positive had been learned respecting the revolution of this distant orb, the same tradition which recorded the discovery of the planet would probably have recorded the nature of its apparent motions.

Be this as it may, we need by no means accept the opinion of Buchanan, that if the Burmese tradition relates to Uranus, Sir William Herschel must be “stripped of his honours.” The rediscovery of a lost planet, especially of one which had remained concealed for so

many centuries, must be regarded as at least as interesting as the discovery of a planet altogether unknown. Nor was there any circumstance in the actual discovery of Uranus, which would lose its interest, even though we accepted quite certainly the conclusion that the Herschelian planet was no other than old Ráhu.\*

Let us turn to Herschel's own narrative of his detection of Uranus. It is in many respects very instructive.

In the first place, we must note the nature of the work he was engaged upon. He had conceived the idea of measuring the distances of the stars, or at least of the nearer stars, by noting whether as the earth circles around the sun the relative positions of stars lying very close to each other seemed to vary in any degree. To this end he was searching the heavens for those objects which we now call double stars, most of which were in his day supposed to be not in reality pairs of stars—that is, not physically associated together—but seen near together only because lying nearly in the same direction. The brighter star of a pair was in fact supposed to lie very much nearer than the fainter; and it was because, being so much nearer, the brighter star should be much more affected (seemingly) by the earth's motion around the sun, that Herschel hoped to learn much by studying the aspect of these unequal double stars at different seasons of the year. He hoped yet more from the study of such bright orbs as are surrounded by several very faint stars. It was a case of this kind that he was dealing with, when accident led him to the discovery of Uranus. "On Tuesday, the 13th of March (1781)," he writes, "between ten and eleven in the evening, while I was examining the small stars in the neighbourhood of Eta in Gemini, I perceived one that appeared visibly larger than the rest. Being struck with its uncommon magnitude, I compared it to Eta and the small stars in the quartile between Auriga and Gemini, and finding it so much larger than either of them, suspected it to be a comet. I was then engaged in a series of observations (which I hope soon to have the opportunity of laying before the Royal Society) requiring very high powers, and I had ready at hand the several magnifiers of 227, 660, 932, 1,536, 2,010, &c., all of which I have successfully used on that occasion. The power I had on when I first saw the (supposed) comet was 227. From experience

\* It is, after all, at least as likely that Ráhu—assuming there really was a planet known under this name—might have been Vesta, the brightest of the small planets which circle between Mars and Jupiter, as the distant and slow-moving Uranus. For although Vesta is not nearly so bright as Uranus, shining indeed only as a star of the seventh magnitude, yet she can at times be seen without telescopic aid by persons of extremely good sight; and her movements are far more rapid than those of Uranus. In the high table-lands of those eastern countries, where some place the birth of astronomy, keen-sighted observers might quite readily have discovered her planetary nature, whereas the slow movements of Uranus would probably have escaped their notice.

I knew that the diameters of the fixed stars are not proportionally magnified with higher powers, as those of the planets are; therefore I now put on the powers of 460 and 932, and found the diameter of the comet increased in proportion to the power, as it ought to be on a supposition of its not being a fixed star, while the diameters of the stars to which I compared it were not increased in the same ratio. Moreover, the comet being magnified much beyond what its light would admit of, appeared hazy and ill-defined with these great powers, while the stars presented that lustre and distinctness which from many thousand observations I knew they would retain. The sequel has shown that my surmises were well-founded."

There are three points to be specially noted in this account. Firstly, the astronomer was engaged in a process of systematic survey of the celestial depths—so that the discovery of the new orb cannot be properly regarded as accidental, although Herschel was not at the time on the look-out for as yet unknown planets. Secondly, the instruments he was employing were of his own construction and device, and probably none others in existence in his day would have led him to the discovery that the strange orb was not a fixed star. And, thirdly, without the experience he had acquired in the study of the heavens he would not have been able to apply the test which, as we have seen, he found so decisive. The fact that the stars are not magnified by increased telescopic power to the same extent as planets or comets, is, as Professor Pritchard has justly remarked, "an important result of the undulatory theory of light, and was unsuspected in Sir William Herschel's day." So that whether we consider the work Herschel was engaged upon, the instruments he used, or the experience he had acquired, we recognise the fact that he alone of the astronomers of his time was capable of discovering Uranus otherwise than by a fortunate accident. Others might have lighted on the discovery—indeed, we shall presently see that the wonder rather is that Uranus had not been for many years a recognised member of the solar system—but there was none but Herschel who could within a few minutes of his first view of the planet have pronounced confidently that the strange orb (whatever it might be) was not a fixed star.

I do not propose to enter here, at length, into the series of researches by which it was finally demonstrated that the newly-discovered body was not a comet but a planet, travelling on a nearly circular path around the sun, at about twice Saturn's distance from that orb. With this part of the work Herschel had very little to do. To use Professor Pritchard's words, having ascertained the apparent size, position, and motion of the stranger, "Herschel very properly consigned it to the care of those professional astronomers who possessed fixed instruments of precision in properly constituted observatories—to Dr. Maskelyne, for instance, who was then the

Astronomer-Royal at Greenwich, and to Lalande, who presided over the observatory in Paris." As the newly-discovered body travelled onwards upon its apparent path, astronomers gradually acquired the means for determining what its real path might be. At first they were misled by erroneous measures of the stranger's apparent size, which suggested that the supposed comet had in the course of the first month after its discovery approached to within half its original distance. At length, setting aside all these measures, and considering only the movements of the stranger, Professor Saron was led to the belief that it was no comet, but a member of the solar system. It was eventually proved, chiefly by the labours of Lexell, Lalande, and the great mathematician Laplace, that this theory fully explained all the observed motions of the newly-discovered body; and before long (so complete is the mastery which the Newtonian system gives astronomers over the motions of the heavenly bodies) all the circumstances of the new planet's real motions became very accurately known. It was now possible, not only to predict the future movements of the stranger, but to calculate his motions during former years. This last process was quickly applied to the planet, with the object of determining whether among the records of observations made on stars, any might be detected which related in reality to the newly-discovered body. The result will appear at first sight somewhat surprising. The new planet had actually been observed no less than nineteen times before that night when Herschel first showed that it was not a fixed star, and those observations were made by astronomers no less eminent than Flamsteed, Bradley, Mayer, and Lemonnier. Flamsteed had seen the planet five several times, each time cataloguing it as a star of the sixth magnitude, so that five such stars had to be dismissed from Flamsteed's lists. But the case of Lemonnier was even more singular; for he had actually observed the planet no less than twelve times, several of his observations having been made within the space of a few weeks. "M. Arago naturally comments," says Professor Pritchard, "on the want of system displayed by Lemonnier in 1769; had he but reduced and arranged his observations in a properly-constructed register, his name instead of Herschel's would have been attached for all time to one of the starry host. But Lemonnier was not a man of order; his astronomical papers are said to have been a very picture of chaos; and M. Bouvard, to whom we have long been indebted for the best tables of the new planet, narrates that he had seen one of Lemonnier's observations of this very star written on a paper bag which had contained hair powder!"

In our days, when fresh planets are being discovered and named in the course of each year that passes, it may appear strange that much difficulty was found in assigning a suitable name to the stranger. But we must remember that for ages the planetary system had been

supposed to comprise no other primary members than those known to the ancients. The discovery of Uranus was an altogether novel and unlooked-for circumstance. It was not supposed that fresh discoveries of like nature would be made, still less that a planet would hereafter be discovered under circumstances far more interesting even than those which attended the discovery of Uranus. Accordingly a mighty work was made before Uranus was fitted with a name. Lalande proposed the name of the discoverer, and the new planet was indeed long known on the Continent by the name of Herschel. The symbol of the planet ( $\Upsilon$ ), the initial letter of Herschel's name with a small globe attached to the cross-stroke, still reminds us of the honour which Continental astronomers generously proposed to render to their fellow-worker in England.\* Lichtenberg proposed the name of Astræa, the goddess of justice—for this “exquisite reason,” that since justice had failed to establish her reign upon earth, she might be supposed to have removed herself as far as possible from our unworthy planet. Poinsonet suggested that Cybele would be a suitable name; for since Saturn and Jupiter, to whom the gods owed their origin, had long held their seat in the heavens, it was time to find a place for Cybele, “the great mother of the gods.” Had the supposed Greek representative of Cybele—Rhæa—been selected for the honour, the name of the planet would have approached somewhat nearly in sound, and perhaps in signification, to the old name Ráhu. But neither Astræa nor Cybele were regarded as of sufficient dignity and importance among the ancient deities to supply a name for the new planet.† Prosperin proposed Neptune as a suitable name, because Saturn would thus have the eldest of his sons on one side of him, and his second son on the other. Bode at length suggested the name of Uranus, the most ancient of the deities; and as Saturn, the father of Jupiter, travels on a wider orbit than Jupiter, so it was judged fitting that an even wider orbit than Saturn's should be adjudged to Jupiter's grandfather. In accepting the name of Uranus for the new planet, astronomers seemed to assert a belief that no planet would be found to travel on a yet wider path; and accordingly when a more distant planet was discovered, the suggestion of Prosperin had to be recen-

\* There is a certain incongruity, accordingly, among the symbols of the primary planets. Mercury is symbolised by his *caduceus*, Venus by her looking-glass (I suppose), Mars by his spear and shield, Jupiter by his throne, Saturn by his sickle; and again, when we pass to the symbols assigned to the planets discovered in the present century, we find Neptune symbolized by his trident, Vesta by her altar, Ceres by her sickle, Minerva by a sword, and Juno by a star-tipped sceptre. Uranus alone is represented by a symbol which has no relation to his position among the deities of mythology.

† Both these names are found among the asteroids, the fifth of these bodies (in order of discovery) being called *Astræa*, the eighty-ninth being named after the great mother of gods and goddesses.

sidered ; but it was too late to change the accepted nomenclature, and accordingly the younger brother of Jupiter has had assigned to him a planet circling outside the paths of that assigned to their father and grandfather. It may be noted, also, that a more appropriate name for the new planet would have been *Cœlus*, since all the other planets have received the Latin names of the deities.

Herschel himself proposed another name. As Galileo had called the satellites of Jupiter the Medicean planets, while French astronomers proposed to call the spots on the sun the Bourbonian stars, so Herschel, grateful for the kindness which he had received at the hands of George III., proposed that the new planet should be called *Georgium Sidus*. On account of the interest attaching to all Herschel's remarks respecting his discovery, I quote in full the letter in which he submitted this proposition to Sir Joseph Banks, then the President of the Royal Society. "By the observations of the most eminent astronomers in Europe," he remarks, "it appears that the new star, which I had the honour of pointing out to them in March, 1781, is a primary planet of our solar system. A body so nearly related to us by its similar condition and situation in the unbounded expanse of the starry heavens, must often be the subject of the conversation, not only of astronomers, but of every lover of science in general. This consideration, then, makes it necessary to give it a name, whereby it may be distinguished from the rest of the planets and fixed stars. In the fabulous ages of ancient times, the appellations of Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, were given to the planets, as being their principal heroes and divinities. In the present more philosophical era, it would be hardly allowable to have recourse to the same method, and call on Juno, Pallas, Apollo, or Minerva, for a name to our new planet. The first consideration in any particular event or remarkable incident seems to be its chronology ; if, in any future age it should be asked *when* this last-found planet was discovered, it would be very satisfactory to say, 'In the reign of George III.' As a philosopher, then, the name of *Georgium Sidus* presents itself to me as an appellation which will conveniently convey the information of the time and country where and when it was brought to view. But as a subject of the best of kings, who is the liberal protector of every art and science ; as a native of the country from whence this illustrious family was called to the British throne ; as a member of that society which flourishes by the distinguished liberality of its royal patron ; and last of all, as a person now more immediately under the protection of this excellent monarch, and owing everything to his unlimited bounty, I cannot but wish to take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude by giving the name of *Georgium Sidus*—

'*Georgium sidus*

—*jam nunc assuesce vocari*,'—

to a star which, with respect to us, first began to shine under his auspicious reign." Herschel concludes by remarking that, by addressing this letter to the President of the Royal Society, he takes the most effectual method of communicating the proposed name to the *literati* of Europe, which he hopes "they will receive with pleasure."

Herschel's proposition found little favour, however, among Continental astronomers. Indeed it is somewhat singular that for some time two names came into general use—one in Great Britain and the other on the Continent, neither being the name eventually adopted for the planet. In books published in England for more than a quarter of a century after the discovery of Uranus we find the planet called either the *Georgium Sidus*, or the *Georgian*. For a shorter season the planet was called on the Continent either the *Herschelian* planet, or simply *Herschel*. Many years elapsed before the present usage was definitely established.

In considering Herschel's telescopic study of the planet, we must remember that, owing to the enormous length of time occupied by Uranus in circling round his orbit, the astronomer labours under a difficulty distinct in character from the difficulties which have already been considered. As Jupiter and Saturn circle on their wide orbits they exhibit to us—the former in the course of eleven years, the latter in the course of twenty-nine and a half years—all those varying presentations which correspond to the seasons of these planets. Jupiter, indeed, owing to the uprightness of his axis (with reference to his path), presents but slight changes. But Saturn's globe is at one time bowed towards us so that a large portion of his north polar regions can be seen, and anon (fifteen years later) is so bowed, that a large portion of his southern polar regions can be seen; while between these epochs we see the globe of Saturn so posed that both poles are on the edge of his disc, and then only does the shape of his disc indicate truly the compression or polar flattening of the planet.

But, although similar changes occur in the case of Uranus, they occupy no less than eighty-four years in running through their cycle, or forty-two years in completing a half cycle—during which, necessarily, all possible presentations of the planet are exhibited. Now it is commonly recognised among telescopists that the observing time of an astronomer's life—that is, the period during which he retains not merely his full skill, but the energy necessary for difficult researches—continues but about twenty-five years at the outside. So that few astronomers can hope to study Uranus in all his presentations, as they can study Mars or Jupiter or Saturn.

When we add to this circumstance the extreme faintness of Uranus, we cannot wonder that Herschel should have been unable to speak very confidently on many points of interest. His measures of the planet's globe were sufficiently satisfactory, and, combined with modern researches, show that Uranus has a diameter exceeding the



earth's rather less than four and a half times. Thus the surface of Uranus exceeds that of our globe about twenty times, and his bulk is more than eighty times as great as the earth's. His volume, in fact, exceeds the combined volume of Mercury, Venus, the Earth, and Mars, almost exactly forty times. But Sir W. Herschel was unable to measure the disc of Uranus in such a way as to determine whether the planet is compressed in the same marked degree as Jupiter and Saturn. All that he felt competent to say was that the disc of the planet seemed to him to be oval, whether he used his seven-feet, or his ten-feet, or his twenty-feet reflector. Arago has expressed some surprise that Herschel should have been content with such a statement. But, in reality, the circumstance is in no way surprising. For, as a matter of fact, Herschel had been almost foiled by the difficulty of measuring even the planet's mean diameter. The discordance between his earliest measures is somewhat startling. His first estimate of the diameter made it ten thousand miles too small (its actual value being about thirty-four thousand miles); his next made it nearly three thousand miles too great; while his third made it ten thousand miles too great. His contemporaries were even less successful. Maskelyne, after a long and careful series of observations, assigned to the planet a diameter eight thousand miles too small; the astronomers of Milan gave the planet a diameter more than twenty thousand miles too great; and Mayer of Mannheim was even more unfortunate, for he assigned to the planet a diameter exceeding its actual diameter of thirty-four thousand miles, by rather more than fifty thousand miles. It will be understood, therefore, that Herschel might well leave unattempted the task of comparing the different diameters of the planet. This task required that he should estimate a quantity (the difference between the greatest and least diameters) which was small even by comparison with the errors of his former measurements.

But, besides this, a peculiarity in the axial pose of Uranus has to be taken into account. I have spoken of the uprightness of Jupiter's axis with reference to his path; and by this I have intended to indicate the fact that if we regard Jupiter's path as a great level surface, and compare Jupiter to a gigantic top spinning upon that surface, this mighty top spins with a nearly upright axis. In the case of Uranus the state of things is altogether different. The axis of Uranus is so bowed down from uprightness as to be nearly in the level of the planet's path. The result of this is that when Uranus is in one part of his path his northern pole is turned almost directly towards us. At such a time we should be able to detect no sign of polar flattening even though Uranus were shaped like a watch-case. At the opposite part the other pole is as directly turned towards the earth. Only at the parts of his path between these two can any signs of compression be expected to manifest themselves; and Uranus

occupies these portions of his path only at intervals of forty-two years.

Herschel would have failed altogether in determining the pose of Uranus but for his discovery that the planet has moons. For the moons of the larger planets travel for the most part near the level of their planet's equator. We can, indeed, only infer this in the case of Uranus (for even the best modern measurements cannot be regarded as satisfactorily determining the figure of his globe), but the inference is tolerably safe.

For six years Herschel looked in vain for Uranian satellites. His largest telescopes, supplemented by his wonderful eyesight and his long practice in detecting minute points of light, failed to reveal any trace of such bodies. At length he devised a plan by which the light-gathering power of his telescopes was largely increased. On the 11th of January, 1787, he detected two satellites, though several days elapsed before he felt justified in announcing the discovery. At intervals, during the years 1790—1798, he repeated his observations; and he supposed that he had discovered four other satellites. He expresses so much confidence as to the real existence of these four bodies, that it is very difficult for those who appreciate his skill to understand how he could have been deceived. But he admits that he was unable to watch any of these satellites through a considerable part of its path, or to identify any of them on different nights. All he felt sure about was that certain points of light were seen which did not remain stationary, as would have happened had they been fixed stars. No astronomer, however, has since seen any of these four additional satellites, though Mr. Lassell has discovered two which Herschel could not see (probably owing to their nearness to the body of the planet). As Mr. Lassell has employed a telescope more powerful than Herschel's largest reflector, and has given much attention to the subject, no one has a better right to speak authoritatively on the subject of these additional satellites. Since, therefore, he is very confident that they have no existence, I feel bound to represent that view as the most probable; yet I am unable to pass from the subject without expressing a hope that one of these days new Uranian satellites will be revealed.

The four known moons travel backwards; that is, they circle in a direction opposed to that in which all the planets of the solar system, and all the moons of Jupiter and Saturn, as well as our own moon, are observed to travel. Much importance has been attached to this peculiarity; but, in reality, the paths of the Uranian moons are so strangely situated with respect to the path of Uranus, that the direction in which they travel can hardly be compared with the common direction of the planetary motions. Imagine the path of Uranus to be represented by a very large wooden hoop floating on a sheet of water; then, if a small wooden hoop were so weighted as to float almost

upright, with one half out of the water, the position of that hoop would represent the position of the path of one of the planet's satellites. It will be seen at once that if we suppose a body to travel round the former hoop in a certain direction, then a body travelling round the latter hoop could scarcely be said to travel in the same direction, whether it circled one way or the other. Or, to employ another illustration, if a watch be laid face upward on a table we should correctly say that its hands move from east through south to west; but, if it be held nearly upright and the face rather upwards, we should scarcely say that the hands moved from east through *south* to west; nor if the face were tilted a little further forward, so as to be inclined rather downwards, should we say that the hands move from east through *north* to west.

The great slope or tilt of the paths is undoubtedly a more singular feature than the direction of motion. Implying as it does that the planet's globe is similarly tilted, it suggests the strangest conceptions as to the seasonal changes of the planet. It seems impossible to suppose that the inhabitants of Uranus, if there are any, can depend on the sun for their supply of heat. The vast distance of Uranus from the sun, although reducing the heat-supply to much less than the three-hundredth part of that which we receive, is yet an insignificant circumstance by comparison with the axial tilt. One can understand at least the *possibility* that some peculiarity in the atmosphere of the planet might serve to remedy the effects of the former circumstance; precisely as our English climate is tempered by the abundant moisture with which the air is ordinarily laden. But while we can conceive that the minute and almost starlike sun of the Uranian skies may supply much more heat than its mere dimensions would lead us to expect, it is difficult indeed to understand how the absence of that sun for years from the Uranian sky can be adequately compensated. Yet in Uranian latitudes corresponding to the latitude of London the sun remains below the horizon for about twenty-three of our years in succession. Such is the Arctic \* night of regions in Uranus occupying a position corresponding to that of places in our temperate zone.

But the most important results of the discovery of the satellites has been the determination of the mass or weight of the planet, whence also the mean density of its substance has been ascertained. It has been thus discovered that, like Jupiter and Saturn, Uranus is constructed of much lighter materials than the earth. Our earth would outweigh almost exactly six times a globe as large as the earth, but

\* It has been remarked that there is some incongruity in the name Arctic planets which I have assigned in my "Other Worlds" to Uranus and Neptune, when considered with reference to the theory I have enunciated that these planets still retain an enormous amount of inherent heat. Many seem to imagine that the term arctic necessarily implies cold. I have of course only used the name as indicating the distance of Uranus and Neptune from the sun.

no denser than Uranus. It is to be noticed that in this respect the outer planets resemble the sun, whose density is but about one-fourth that of the earth. It seems impossible that the apparent size of any one of the outer planets can truly indicate the dimensions of its real globe. An atmosphere of enormous extent must needs surround, it would seem, the liquid or solid nucleus which probably exists within the orb we see.

In the case of Jupiter or Saturn, the telescope has told us much which bears on this point; and, as I have indicated in these pages, and elsewhere, there is an overwhelming mass of evidence in favour of the theory that those orbs are still instinct with their primeval fires. But in the case of Uranus, it might well be deemed hopeless to pursue such inquiries, otherwise than by considering the analogy of the two larger planets. Direct evidence tending to show that the atmosphere of Uranus is in a condition wholly differing from that of our own atmosphere, cannot possibly be obtained by means of any telescopes yet constructed by men. Some astronomers assert that they have seen faint traces of belts across the disc of Uranus; but the traces must be very faint indeed, since the best telescopes of our day fail to show any marks whatever upon the planet's face. Even if such belts can be seen, their changes of appearance cannot be studied systematically.

It is, however, on this very subject—the condition of the planet's atmosphere—that the discovery I have now to describe throws light.

Faint as is the light of Uranus, yet when a telescope of sufficient size is employed, the spectrum of the planet is seen as a faint rainbow-tinted streak. The peculiarities of this streak, if discernible, are the means whereby the spectroscopist is to ascertain what is the condition of the planet's atmosphere. Now, Father Secchi, studying Uranus with the fine eight-inch telescope of the Roman Observatory, was able to detect certain peculiarities in its spectrum, though it would now appear that (owing probably to the faintness of the light) he was deceived as to their exact nature. He says: "The yellow part of the spectrum is wanting altogether. In the green and the blue there are two bands, very wide and very dark." But he was unable to say what is the nature of the atmosphere of the planet, or to show how these peculiarities might be accounted for.

Recently, however, the Royal Society placed in the hands of Dr. Huggins a telescope much more powerful than either the Roman telescope or the instrument with which Dr. Huggins had made his celebrated observations on sun and planets, stars and star-cloudlets. It is fifteen inches in aperture, and has a light-gathering power fully three times as great as that possessed by either of the instruments just mentioned.

As seen by the aid of this fine telescope the spectrum of Uranus is found to be complete, "no part being wanting, so far as the feeble-

ness of its light permits it to be traced." But there are six dark bands, or strong lines, indicating the absorptive action of the planet's atmosphere. One of these strong lines corresponds in position with one of the lines of hydrogen. Now it may seem at a first view that since the light of Uranus is reflected solar light, we might expect to find in the spectrum of Uranus the solar lines of hydrogen. But the line in question is too strong to be regarded as merely representing the corresponding line in the solar spectrum; indeed, Dr. Huggins distinctly mentions that "the bands produced by planetary absorption are broad and strong in comparison with the solar lines." We must conclude, therefore, that there exists in the atmosphere of Uranus the gas hydrogen, sufficiently familiar to us as an element which appears in combination with others, but which we by no means recognise as a suitable constituent (at least to any great extent) of an atmosphere which living creatures are to breathe.\* And not only must hydrogen be present in the atmosphere of Uranus, but in such enormous quantities as to be one of the chief atmospheric constituents. The strength of the hydrogen line cannot otherwise be accounted for. If by the action of tremendous heat all the oceans of our globe could be changed into their constituent elements, hydrogen and oxygen, it is probable that the signs by which an inhabitant of Venus or Mercury could recognise that such a change had taken place would be very much less marked than the signs by which Dr. Huggins has discovered that hydrogen exists in the atmosphere of Uranus. It will indeed be readily inferred that this must be the case, when the fact is noted that no signs whatever of the existence of nitrogen can be recognised in the spectrum of Uranus, though it is difficult to suppose that nitrogen is really wanting in the planet's atmosphere. Dr. Huggins also notes that none of the lines in the spectrum of Uranus appear to indicate the presence of carbonic acid. Nor are there any lines in the spectrum of Uranus corresponding to those which make their appearance in the solar spectrum when the sun is low down, and is therefore shining through the denser atmospheric strata. Most of these lines are due to the presence of aqueous vapour in our atmosphere, and it would seem to follow that if the vapour of water exists at all in the atmosphere of Uranus its quantity must be small compared with that of the free hydrogen.

Admitting that the line seen by Dr. Huggins is really due to hydrogen—a fact of which he himself has very little doubt—we certainly have a strange discovery to deal with. If it be remembered that oxygen, the main supporter of such life as we are familiar with, cannot be mixed with hydrogen without the certainty that the first spark will cause an explosion (in which the whole of one or other of

\* Traces of hydrogen can nearly always be detected in the air,—but the quantity of hydrogen thus shown to be present is almost infinitesimally small compared with the amount of oxygen and nitrogen.

the gases will combine with a due portion of the other to produce water), it is difficult to resist the conclusion that oxygen must be absent from the atmosphere of Uranus. If hydrogen could be added in such quantities to our atmosphere as to be recognisable from a distant planet by spectroscopic analysis, then no terrestrial fires could be lighted, for a spark would produce a catastrophe in which all living things upon the earth, if not the solid earth itself, would be destroyed. A single flash of lightning would be competent to leave the earth but a huge cinder, even if its whole frame were not rent into a million fragments by the explosion which would ensue.

Under what strange conditions then must life exist in Uranus, if there be indeed life upon that distant orb. Either our life-sustaining element, oxygen, is wanting; or, if it exists in sufficient quantities (according to our notions) for the support of life, then there can be no fire, natural or artificial, on that giant planet. It seems more reasonable to conclude that, as had been suspected for other reasons, the planet is not at present in a condition which renders it a suitable abode for living creatures.

RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

## GROWING GREY.

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"On a l'âge de son cœur."

A. D'HOUDETOT.

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A LITTLE more toward the light ;—  
" *Me miserum.*" Here's one that's white ;  
And one that's turning ;  
Adieu to song and "salad days ;"  
My Muse, let's go at once to Jay's  
And order mourning.

We must reform our rhymes, my dear,—  
Renounce the gay for the severe,—  
Be grave, not witty ;  
We have, no more, the right to find  
That Pyrrha's hair is neatly twined,—  
That Chloe's pretty.

Young Love's for us a farce that's played ;  
Light canzonet and serenade  
No more may tempt us ;  
Grey hairs but ill accord with dreams,  
From aught but sour didactic themes  
Our years exempt us.

" *A la bonne heure !*" You fancy so ?  
You think for one white streak we grow  
At once satiric ?  
A fiddlestick ! Each hair's a string  
To which our greybeard Muse shall sing  
A younger lyric.

Our heart's still sound. Shall "cakes and ale"  
Grow rare to youth because we rail  
At schoolboy dishes ?  
Perish the thought ! 'Tis ours to sing  
Though neither Time nor Tide can bring  
Belief with wishes.

AUSTIN DOBSON.

## LONDON AMUSEMENTS.

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### No. II.

THE geography-books say that Strasbourg is situated "on the Ill, not far from the Rhine," but I found it the other night upon the left bank of the moonlit Thames, not far from Battersea Bridge. My object in visiting the famous city was to witness its advertised recapture by the French, but that event was not due until eleven p.m. Meantime I wandered in the verdant environs of the city.

Arches of green, red, and golden lamps span the broad garden paths, along which stand statues in double line ; some holding globe-lamps in their hands, and some, Atlas-like, on their bent shoulders. Other statues glimmer out of green gloom. Tiny fountains are splashing in the blended light of gas and oil and moon, and the blaze of scarlet geraniums can still be made out, although dimmed, in the trim crowded flower-beds. Ghostly index-hands point "To the Hermit." The passer-by is invited to enter the "Gipsy's Cave," and a closed bower announces itself as the palace of the "Queen of the Lilliputians." In the darkest recess of a darksome row of otherwise deserted supper-boxes a pair of turtle-dove lovers are billing and cooing. The more cheerful supper-boxes and the *al fresco* seats by the dancing-platform are every minute getting more crowded. The blazing bars are filled ; the engine-handles are for ever going ; pop, pop, pop fly the corks ; effervescing beverages seem to cool the sultry summer air with their refreshing fizz, and lumps of ice knock against the sides of tumblers with a similarly cooling sound as inexperienced sherry-cobbler drinkers clumsily manipulate their straws. Some of the pleasure-takers are playing skittles (whose rumble adds a rolling swell to the bass of the band), cracking toy rifles, getting their correct weight taken, or enjoying those other delights of which, as inscrutably, cockneys, whatever their age, seem never to weary, the oscillating motion of the swing, the rotary motion of the merry-go-round. But the dancing-platform is the great focus of attraction. In the centre rises the pagoda-like orchestra, its outlines defined on the pearl-grey sky with glowing lamps. Its inner circle of dancers, its outer circle of watchers, are both motley groups. There are family parties there of husband, wife, and children ; young men and their sweethearts ; quite staid-looking old maids stalking in a string, with their heads up like geese, after the roguish friend who is showing them London life ; grey-haired Darby



and Joan couples (the old gentlemen got up in white waistcoats) who apparently have taken to sight-seeing late in life, and go about, holding tight to each other and chuckling at everything they see ; young swells, flushed from the dinner-table, with dust-coats over their evening dress ; ineffable snobs of every age ; fast shop-girls, who have come out unescorted for a somewhat hazardous spree ; middle-aged men about town on the leering look out for them ; foreigners and countryfolks ; guardsmen, artillerymen, and Chelsea pensioners ; and dashing women of the town, dancing with one another until they can obtain male partners. The best dancers on the platform are two children, tiny mites of girls ; now they dance with one another, and anon one takes her mother, and the other her father, for a partner. A considerable sprinkling of the people on the platform, no doubt, are dancing with as innocent although not so fresh an enjoyment as their own, but it occurs to me that I should not like to see my little girls dancing on that platform, when I note the looks and gestures, and hear the words, of some of the people against whom the little things have to brush. Two fish-eyed fools, too drunk to dance, are leaning on their elbows against the platform fence, with sodden, champed cigarettes, that have gone out, drooping down their slobbered chins ; their hats on the backs of their heads, and their Dulcineas' "cloud" scarfs twisted round their necks and dangling to their knees. The Dulcineas, in a bad temper at having had to do their dancing by themselves, come up to claim their scarfs. "Oh," exclaims the angrier lady to the brace of only semi-conscious swains as she wrenches her scarf from the custody of the one she has appropriated, "if you did but know what asses you look, you wouldn't make such — fools of yourselves."

Phryne's characterisation of her friends is indisputably accurate, but I am inclined to doubt her conclusion. So far as folly is concerned, they look as if they were past praying for. On the whole, however, outward decorum is kept up. To preserve order in the crowd, through which red-collared and cuffed waiters are darting with bibbles and edibles, brawny sentries in white military tunics—the biggest sporting also a military shoulder-scarf—walk, with full consciousness of their uniformed muscle, their stately rounds. A fat, half-sprung snob in knickerbockers is disgusted with the comparative quietude of the scene he has selected for the exhibition of his brown-stockinged calves. "But then," he remarks, explanatorily, to the young fellows he has brought with him, "you would come, you see, so bla-a-astedly early."

The military band, preceded by the bearer of an illuminated announcement of the next item of the night's amusement, strikes up, and we follow into the ball-room, where we witness a comic ballet—the comicality of which consists in the mutual knocking down and about which the male performers get from one another—a kind

of fun, however, which is shriekingly appreciated both in the free and in the more sparsely-occupied "reserved" portions of the house. In the same room we afterwards witness the "*marvellous* trajectic performance" of two Mexican athletes. The italicised adjective really is not misapplied. One of the dark-haired, wild-eyed fellows, after having clambered and swung about on his lofty "trapeze," in the fashion that has become hackneyed, hangs from it head downwards, with a bar in his hands, which the other fellow, tumbling off his lofty perch, catches hold of. So linked, the two swing backwards and forwards, until at last the inverted man lightly lifts his mate on to a perch again, on which the lifted man spins round and round, vertically, like a Catherine wheel.

Again the military band strikes up, and we troop into the "Theatre Royal" to assist at a ballet for which a "*Première Danseuse*" from "the principal Continental theatres" has been engaged. One can detect a difference between her posturing and that of the ruck of poor girls who have been engaged to expose, on far cheaper terms, their breasts and legs and gauzy flutter of under-petticoats to a prurient public; but the second dancer seems to me to dance, at any rate, almost as well as the first. It is comical to note the look with which Miss Second regards Mademoiselle La Première, when Miss Second has to stand still, watching her higher-priced rival's performances. "How the sixpenny must hate the eightpenny!" some wit is reported to have said to his friend, when they passed an oyster-shop, in the far-off times in which oysters were so priced per dozen.

And now for the recapture of Strasbourg. Its far-famed cathedral, to quote the graphic programme, is seen in the distance, as it appeared before the shells of the Prussian soldiers had defaced its beauties. In the centre is a bridge leading to the interior of the city, which is guarded by Prussian sentinels. To the right and left are forts with mounted guns (a startling fact, according to the programme, since it is announced in big capitals, followed by a note of admiration), and the Prussian standard flying. The Barrack Battery mounting its heavy cannon, the earthworks and trenches surrounding the city, all has the aspect of safe repose (the graphic programme is responsible for grammar and logic), whilst early industry is indicated by market people with their carts, waggons, &c., entering and leaving the city. The Prussian artillery are bringing guns over the bridge, and placing them in position, and the tolling of the distant cathedral bell imparts to the whole scene an air of solemnity.

So says the graphic programme; but a disillusioned small boy, mounted on a fence hard by me, exclaims, as often as he hears the toll of that distant bell, "There goes the tea-tray again," and, indeed, the sound is *not* unlike that which might be evoked from a tea-tray

performed upon tambourine-fashion *adagio*. Suddenly, the graphic programme goes on, a distant bugle is heard, which is answered from the trenches; rockets immediately ascend from the earthworks as the signal for the night surprise. The cannon from the surrounding forts and batteries suddenly open fire, and shells are poured from every available point in the city. The French soldiers, who have hitherto been concealed, rush over the bridge to the attack, and are met by the Prussians with a withering fire from their artillery and needle-guns. The French still rush on, now supported by the cavalry, who charge at the same moment. Soldiers of the line and Zouaves issue from a deep and secure approach and join in the attack, supported by mitrailleuses. ("More cavalry!" shout the spectators. "No, they isn't," retorts the disillusioned small boy. "It's the same uns—they keeps on cuttin' round and round.") The rockets have now set the houses in flames. The inhabitants rush frantically from their dwellings, bearing with them all they can rescue from the fire. Fierce attacks and severe contests take place to regain possession of the works. The last, the bravest, the most terrible encounter (repeated cries of "More cavalry!" with counter cry of "I tell ye they ain't!" from the small boy), but fortunately for the French, the victorious struggle takes place, ending in the recapture of the city of Strasbourg and ascent of the figure of Peace amidst a gorgeous bouquet of coloured rockets. Before the attack, we heard the calmly defiant "Watch on the Rhine;" we march away from the retaken city behind a band that brays out the blood-and-head-and-toes-stirring "Marseillaise." And then the fun on the dancing-platform grows fast and furious. Pleasure-takers in the verdant environs of Strasbourg on the Thames, at any rate, enjoy fresh air. But I am puzzled to find out the nature of the enjoyment of the occupants of a theatre-pit into which I look one sweltering Saturday night. They are packed so tightly that everybody's right arm can feel the beat of his neighbour's heart. Some are obliged to stand. The air is so "close" that the Rimmel-scented playbill—which the quiet mannered attendants present gratuitously, without the slightest hint in tone or look that, nevertheless, they expect a gratuity for it—is a very pleasant refreshment for the nose. But what has the thronged pitful come out for to see? A sorry farce with tol-lol songs sung just tolerably—in other words, a "popular comic opera." Its "Grand Duchess" I remember when she was a sharp chit of a girl just invented as an actress by an enterprising manager at the Antipodes. She has grown up into a clever woman actress, and she is infinitely more modest than Mdlle. Schneider in the rôle she is playing after her. But since the indecent reputation which Mdlle. Schneider's acting gave the *Grand Duchess*, seems, if I may judge from the remarks I overhear, to be the secret of its "drawing" power, it seems queer to me that people so attracted

can sit out patiently—stewing like pears, frizzling like fried sausages—a comparatively very tame performance of the piece.

It is even more puzzling to discover the *raison d'être là*, on a sultry late summer, or early autumn night, of the crowd I find in a W.C. music hall. The air is foul with the scents of beer and wine and grog and bad tobacco, issuing from glasses, mouths, pipes, and perspiring pores. The roped-off plebeian pleasure-takers are no worse in this respect than those whose tickets admit them to the "stalls, balcony, and lounge." What possible pleasure can the occupants of the muslin-curtained boxes, who, being highest up, get the worst of the bad air, enjoy? What is there to see, what is there to hear, that average beings could call enjoyable, if average beings were always rational? A lot of people smoking and drinking—spoonneys walking off with third-rate harlots—fourth-rate ditto taking up with waiters in default of more remunerative customers; idiotic songs and dances; squeaky little bits of utterly uninteresting "dramatic performances." The "Great High-Low" is pompously announced, and the hall-servants make a great fuss in padding with mattresses the wooden staging that runs through the hall beneath the Great High-Low's line of swing. The Great High-Low comes out, and makes a human shuttle and pendulum of himself. Poor Great High-Low! I pity him. He looks so pale, and tired, and heart-sick of the whole business. He has hardly patience to make even an apology for a bow in acknowledgment of the applause which greets his entrance, performances, and exit. "Ish it not," exclaims a fuddled old fool, dipping his nose into his nearly-drained pewter pot, when High-Low has thrown his final double-somersault, "ish it *not*, sir, be-yeautiful, shublime, and glorioush, me-mild, mashestic, foamin', free? Ter-rific, ain't it, shir? Sheems to me, shir—who are ye now?—perfecky appallin'."

The Covent Garden concerts, with their carpeted promenade, their mirrors, palms, and ferns, glittering buffets, and snug little café tables, afford a pleasanter lounge; but when people pay money professedly to listen to music, why *don't* they listen to it? At any rate, let other people hear it who want to? Even during the songs there is a shuffling of feet, a murmur of voices, and ever and anon a burst of idiotic laughter. A young gentleman of a sentimental turn goes out when "Home, sweet Home" is sung. "He can't stand it he says," howls one of his companions to another, with a half-drunken guffaw of scorn, "the — fool." Another young gentleman in spectacles is of a studious turn. He is leaning against the wall reading the *Edinburgh Review*! Why on earth couldn't he read it at home instead of paying for standing-room in a crowd to read it in?

On leaving I presented my pass to a shock-headed urchin in half a shirt and a trouser and three-quarters. I scarcely suppose that he could hope for personal admission; but, as he appeared very grateful,

I presume that he had means of negotiating the oblong of pink paste-board.

"Now then for the barmaids!" cries a grinning little call-boy, as the *Cupid* touches at North Woolwich. The gardens in which they are on show are not considered a fashionable place of amusement, but they are a pleasant little oasis of prettiness in the dreary desert of the Essex marshes. They have avenues of trees, lawns, flower-beds, statues, fountains, and a miniature lake, and still more miniature mountain. A balconied hotel overlooks the bustle of the Thames, and along the river-bank runs a broad terrace walk, planted with flag-staves—a good deal taller than the trees—on which droops or flutters many-coloured bunting. When I enter, the "Barmaid Contest" has not commenced. A little crowd is waiting patiently at the door of the building in which it is to come off. The other holiday-makers are amusing themselves in the maze, in swings, and on merry-go-rounds, in getting their correct heights and weights taken, at the archery-targets, in talking nonsense to the non-competing barmaids at the garden-bars, and, after the usual Cockney fashion, in steadily persistent beer-drinking. Although it is still early in the afternoon, one gentleman from Whitechapel has already taken too much for him. He receives a hint that if he cannot behave himself he will be turned out of the gardens, whereupon he shouts in scorn, "Turn me hout, will yer? I should like to see the slop as 'ud lay a 'and on me! That's 'ow you may frighten most of the folks you gits down 'ere; but you can't frighten *me*. I know too much, *I* do."

But the money-taker is in his box, and a crowd is surging round it to get tickets for the "contest." A burly policeman employed to keep order is asked whether he is one of the barmaids. A roar of laughter follows this brilliant flash of wit, but the constable pays not the slightest attention to either. He stolidly ignores the chaff. I will now quote from the programme:—

#### GRAND BARMAID CONTEST.

*Monday, September 11th, 1871, and during the week.*

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.—The Young Ladies competing have been selected from a large number of applicants, and combine GOOD CHARACTERS, CIVILITY, OBLIGING MANNERS, and ATTENTION TO BUSINESS.

The following prizes, amounting in value to upwards of £100, supplied by Mr. J. W. BENSON, Ludgate Hill, will be presented by the Proprietor to the successful Candidates, who have been selected by the Public, and the Jury, of 12 Proprietors and managers of the most extensive Refreshment Departments in London.

1st Prize.—A Gold Watch and Chain, value £20.

2nd Prize.—A Gold Locket with Chain complete.

3rd Prize.—A Solid Gold Brooch.

4th Prize.—A Pair of Gold Earrings.

And various other Prizes, consisting of Jewellery, &c.

Each Young Lady will be presented with One Sovereign, so that none can be losers by attending the Contest.

The Proprietor calls the attention of all the Licensed Victuallers to assist him in forwarding the principal objects of this Contest, which are mainly to bring before the Public a most deserving and industrious class of Servants. The good opinion of the Press last year is a sufficient guarantee of the respectability of the Contest.

#### RULES AND CONDITIONS.

The following Code of Rules is respectfully submitted to the Young Ladies entering into the above Contest, as absolutely necessary to be strictly observed.

1.—Each Young Lady must be in her Bar at 2 p.m., the Contest commencing each day at 3 o'clock, and concluding at 10 p.m., half an hour being allowed for Refreshments, which will be provided by the Proprietor.

2.—No Young Lady will be permitted to take part in the Contest, unless she is over 16 Years of Age, and has been in the Refreshment Business for 12 months, and the best references and testimonials she can produce will considerably tend in her favour at the final award of Prizes.

3.—It is absolutely necessary that each Candidate shall attend every day during the 6 days, and should any one absent herself without permission of the Proprietor or Manager, she will be debarred any participation in the Prizes.

4.—Should any Candidate misconduct herself during the Contest, the Manager will have power to immediately discharge her.

5.—The Bars will be fitted up on the same admirable plan as adopted last year, and each Young Lady will have a separate Bar, stocked with Refreshments to serve the Public.

6.—Each visitor attending will be presented with a voting paper, and can record their vote in favour of the Young Lady they consider the most deserving, and the number of votes will be taken into consideration by the Jury, when awarding the Prizes.

7.—The Jury in making their awards will consider extreme neatness of Costume, nothing being so requisite as *plain* but *good* articles of dress, in which a happy blending of colours without prominent display will be most suitable.

8.—As it is very desirous that the forthcoming Contest should be conducted in every sense with the utmost propriety and decorum, every Young Lady is requested to ingratiate herself with the Public in the most affable manner at her command, without undue forwardness or frivolity, but still retaining a strict attention to business.

9.—Railway Fares to and from Fenchurch Street, Bishopsgate Street, and intermediate Stations, will be provided at the Proprietor's expense.

A Full Band will be in attendance every day during the Contest, and perform a selection of the most popular music of the day. Also several first-class Singers, making this Contest a Superb Promenade Concert, the same as last year.

A counter runs down each side, and a double counter down the middle of the room. These are divided into numbered bars, behind which stand some twenty-eight "young ladies." Sooth to say, some of them are almost old ladies. There they stand and wait, ready to serve, but looking rather sheepish in their pens, as the band plays and the sightseers walk round and round staring at them. There is none of the fastness which might be expected in such a scene, and the hope of witnessing and sharing in which, I fancy, has drawn a considerable sprinkling of the young men visitors to the gardens. The Barmaid Contest is simply a dismal absurdity.

A SAUNTERER.

## FELICITÀ.

### A STORY OF MODERN ROME.

---

THERE is a city lying in the sun,  
You English know it, or you think you know ;  
For when your cold time drives your heat away,  
When all our vineyard slopes lie stripped and bare,  
And many days the piazza-steps the same,—  
Because our life-blood shivers if it blow,  
Or if the smallest cloud drop smallest rain,  
And in the sun we live, or not at all,—  
When all our gardens lose their colour'd dress,  
And lizards frightened spin from crack to creak,  
Missing the roses that they slept upon,  
Before one violet has hung its head,  
And when the frost is battling with our sun,  
You English come to Rome, and call it fair.

Ah, could you see it in those later times,  
When April ripens into early May,  
When gardens may lie full or bare, none heeds,  
Because the earth is garden everywhere !  
Words fail me ; but, indeed, I mean the while  
Before the earth grows thirsty, as she does  
Even at Rome—and in her thirst looks wan.

Just then, she looking old, not yet new-born,  
You come, I say, and leave her, well content.  
He used to say so—" Ah, they go," he said,  
" Prating of ' I have seen, and that,' and this,  
And Rome, too, in the rest. I saw it well :  
I past a month there. Would you see my notes ? ' "  
He did not see it so. He came to live,  
To mingle with his breath the breath of Rome.

And in the spring he came, when all the crowd  
Had done their rushing to and fro, their talk  
Aloud in churches ; and the clink of gold  
Had faded into slow exchange and dull,  
As brown-cloaked brothers emptied ragged pouch,  
Or doled a lira with reluctant hand.

Ah, I had thought you English all were rich,  
All made to buy our work and lives at once,  
Had he not come that spring-time into Rome,  
Pitiful, poor—as any pilgrim comes.

One day, we talking of the time, he said :  
 " And pilgrim was I, O my saint, my wife !—  
 My shrine the piazza-steps, Madonna—you,  
 Ay, and your round pink finger-tips my beads,  
 My coral rosary to count upon."  
 I chid him then—" You should not speak this way,  
 Our Lady will be angered, if you put  
 A contadina on a height with her ;  
 And if you lose her favour, then you know  
 Nothing will serve us, and our case is lost."

" But if I pray," said he, " upon these beads,  
 And take your kiss for chrism on my brow,  
 You nor your Lady cannot wish me ill ?  
 There are a-many gates to God, methinks,  
 If but one road. And, as for me, I find  
 My op'ning into Heaven is on the earth."

Ah, well, I never had the heart to flout  
 His pretty reasons while he talked me down.  
 He talked down everything, except my love,  
 And that he never would ; for no man can.  
 I know but little now, and once knew less  
 Before the time he sealed me with his smile ;  
 Before the time this Love awoke to life,  
 And willing to essay his untried wings,  
 Found himself soaring, ere he thought to rise.

O have you loved, you English, as we love ?  
 You English women, I would ask of you ;  
 A man's love is a diverse thing from ours,  
 And touching that I ask no question now ;  
 For I have proved it, and have found it sweet.  
 Do you turn cold from sudden heats, as we,  
 And back from cold to fevers of delight ?  
 And looking at some faces, nay, a face,  
 Is the night after sleepless, and the day  
 Trailed into centuries except you meet ?  
 Or can your English love beget a soul  
 Where a soul lacks, and feed what it begets ?  
 Being a worthless nothing, do you rise  
 On sudden into filling of a place ?  
 Do you wipe out your pasts, and with a sigh  
 Begin to live, to suffer, to enjoy ?

For me, I woke so on a summer day.  
 Till then, a contadina on the steps,  
 A child at play with shadows and the sun,  
 A model—straight-cut nose, eyes not amiss,  
 Hair like the hair of others of my kind,  
 Hands smaller, if you please, and feet—to dance.

Yet when I found myself unlike myself,  
 Strong, as I tell you, with the strength love gives,



I never had the heart to hold my own ;  
 Not when he gave me saintship on this wise,  
 Not when I trembled, catching at his sleeve,  
 With "Hush! you frighten me ; and She will hear."  
 Then he would change his speech indeed, and smile ;  
 But O I fear me not for shame that pricked,  
 But only that it was I who said, "Be still."

He said no harm would come ; and, as for me,  
 I know not. But this much I know : the Mars  
 He thought to finish fell down from its place  
 After he spoke so of the shrine and beads.

I am not good at telling any tale,  
 And least of all at speaking in your tongue ;  
 For though he taught me, no hard master he,  
 And though to him I made my meanings plain,  
 And he would praise me, saying, "It is well,  
 Myself could say no better, dear, my wife—"  
 Ah, weary me! himself is gone, and I  
 Shall never find so patient ear again.  
 Love makes us but ill-judges, though they say  
 Justice is juster, for the being blind,  
 And love is blind, so therefore should be just.

I am not good at telling any tale ;  
 But so it please you, and you be not hard,  
 I will essay to make my story brief.

There is a city lying in the sun—  
 You English know it, or you think you know,  
 But you will grant me that I know it best,  
 Having the lesson many years by heart—  
 For me its every stone, and turn, and tree,  
 Its every broken wall and crowded street  
 Is full of stories that I may not tell.  
 But when I, looking back across the years,  
 And through the mists that darken in my eyes,  
 Would picture to myself and you this place,  
 No church nor chapel, ruined wall or arch,  
 Should stand out fronting from the common haze.  
 I tell you, you must see who have not seen,  
 And who have seen must come and see again :  
 No leaflet or no branch shows fair its tree,  
 Nor can a jasper-stone describe us heaven,  
 And he who knows in part, knows not at all.

It has a colour, though, this place, I think ;  
 I think I mind me mostly it is blue.  
 Yes—blue, blue everywhere ; for over it  
 A great blue dome is holding down the earth.  
 They say the dome of Michael Angelo  
 Is fairest in the world : I do not know,

Not knowing much of any world but Rome,  
 But yet I like the dome God made Himself  
 Better than this one made by man for God,  
 It is so grand and high, so broad and wide,  
 It holds so much inside its giant bell.  
 Near to its sides the thin blue Alban hills,  
 Then the Campagna plain that girds us round,  
 Acting as Cerberus, with his foul breath  
 Keeping off meaner breaths from tainting Rome.  
 And next the Doria gardens, and the hill  
 Called Monte Mario, and hundreds more :  
 I cannot stop to reckon them to-day.

And, last, the seven great hills that none may count,  
 Except their zeal rise up and make a hill  
 For more than one is buried long ago.  
 No bad thing that, he used to say, since most  
 Good things at Rome are lying in the ground.

See such you may at any hour you list  
 Between the matins and the Angelus ;  
 Not come to life, but life come back to them,  
 Great men carved out in iron, grand men, too,  
 Like him, my husband, in his better times.  
 And marble women aged a thousand years  
 Still white and fresh, and young as I to-day,  
 With bare round arms like mine, and finer hands  
 Clutching black earth, as if they woke awhile  
 After the burial, as that woman did  
 They took from San Filippo, not yet cold  
 And buried living, taking her for dead.  
 But calm these faces are, as was not hers,  
 Nor any hand grips tight to any breast,  
 Nor holds on wildly to the marble hair :  
 And very cold they are, although so fine,  
 Most passionless—I cannot bear their look.

Or could not, till he taught me what to love,  
 And what it was that hindered me in most  
 From thinking, " You have hated, loved, and wept :  
 You are a woman—weak, then strong, then weak ;  
 Fretful and patient, full of pains and faults,  
 Empty of steadfastness in little things,  
 But once made full, most steadfast, and most glad."  
 Have patience with me ; for I would be brief.

Grief comes to few on sudden ; there are steps  
 Downwards, to show us whitherward we tend.  
 For me, I find no point of which to say,  
 " Here was the rose-bower of my paradise—"  
 No water-shed where joy at fullest height  
 Turned and sped leaping to a black abyss.

Rather it came with creeping steps and slow,  
Drawing a veil athwart our cloudless noon,—  
Thin webs at first that I could scarce espy,  
But closing, thick'ning, till they hid the sun.

He was a sculptor, by his toil we lived,  
We, and the child God gave us, day by day ;  
And then the times grew hard, and friends were few.  
The strangers came and saw, and sometimes bought,  
More often came and saw and did not buy ;  
They did not know how barely then we held  
Body and souls from parting company.

I mind me chiefly of a certain time  
When clouds had thicken'd vastly, and we called  
No single lira ours in all the world.  
Two weeks had passed, and through the narrow door  
No face, unfriendly or of friend, had peered.  
The workmen one by one had dropped away  
With, " We are better paid—or here—or there—"  
" We *cannot* work for what the signor pays."  
Battista only stayed. " No wife," he said,  
" Or nestlings open-mouthed await me home :  
Let the signora be at rest on this."  
He " still could work," and " better times would come."

One day, half crazed, because my husband's face  
Grew paler ever and his hand less strong,  
And that the little one, his child and mine,  
Cried for the food we had not, nor could earn,  
That day I found Battista in the shed  
Breathing upon his fingers pinched and blue.  
At sight of me he caught his chisel, shamed  
That I should see he suffered as did we—  
A noble shame I would the world could know—  
And fell to chipping straightway. When I spoke  
He raised his head a little with a blush ;  
Save for the blush himself had seemed but carved,  
So white his forehead, so complete his face.

" Battista, brother ! " so I first began,  
" I am distressed, and would ask help of you—  
Nay, do not start, God knows you help us well,  
But something I would have you promise still.  
Battista, will you promise ? on your beads ? "

" What man may do for saint, that will I do,"  
He said, and chipped a rugged turn of hair :  
And I, " Then this—for you can do it well,  
Lay me the chisel here across my hand,  
And kiss my hand in giving if you will,  
For this is parting, brother—fare you well."

"What would you have?" cried he with staring eyes.  
 And I again, "That you should go, my friend.  
 Battista, hearken! is it not enough  
 That I should see him madden, and the child,  
 My child and his, our only one, our boy,  
 Cry to the ears that cannot yet be deaf,  
 With mouth that must but shortly be so dumb?  
 Is it enough, I say, or would you add  
 One other torture to the pains I bear?  
 Battista, I beseech you go your way!  
 Let us die guiltless at the least, my friend,  
 Not with your blood upon his head and mine."

"Lady," he said, and all his face was shook,  
 In part, with pity, and in part with scorn—  
 "What you would have me do I cannot do,  
 But, still, since you have called me brother, I  
 Am bold to speak to you in brother's wise.  
 There is a way—for long I feared to speak,  
 But you have come, I hold my peace no more—  
 There is a way, a way that will not fail,  
 Nor new to you, dear lady, as I think,  
 Who never shunned to tell me how you sat  
 In old days waiting on the Spanish steps;  
 Not waiting rather, since the painters fought,  
 So say the folk—to catch at your sweet face  
 That never yet was caught as I have seen.  
 Go now, Signora—smooth the smooth black plaits,  
 And don the folded kerchief, coloured vest,  
 The silver earrings that you used to wear;  
 Sit in the sunshine for a little while,  
 And trust me that you bring a scudo home."

I turned it over in my troubled mind,  
 Perhaps amiss, for so it seemed to fall.  
 I took my sleeping baby in my arms  
 And out and through the streets in haste I sped.  
 For the first time in all my wedded life—  
 Nay, and before, since ever I had loved,  
 I took another's word, not his, my lord.

What use to ask? I knew he would not hear:  
 You English are so proud, you rather starve  
 Than stoop to pick a jewel from the dirt,  
 If stooping you must soil those hands at all.  
 We too are proud, but in another kind,  
 And when we love we quite forget our pride;  
 And I, who scorned but just a month gone by  
 To sell my face's beauty, that I held  
 Now only beautiful and good for one—  
 I, poor Felicità (strange words to link,  
 And stranger name for one of heavy heart),  
 Sped through the Corso, through the jostling crowd,

Eager to reach my well-known Spanish steps,  
And close his mouth, my husband's, if he spoke  
In anger, with my earnings and a kiss.

There is a church, San Carlo is its name,  
Stands back inviting from the noisy throng ;  
Aside I pushed the curtain, entered in,  
Took of the holy water, crossed us both,  
And knelt down weary on the marble floor.  
Ah me ! I fear me that as cold as that  
Has grown my piety since I was wed !  
And it should be so otherwise, for now  
Had I not *three* to pray for to the saints ?

Out again, out into the warm, bright street,  
Out of the chillsome aisle, and into light.  
I thought the curtain easier pushed aside  
In passing out than when I passed within,  
But maybe 'twas my soul had grown more strong.

Another moment I had found the place  
I sat in always in the days gone by—  
The sun above me, and the constant blue.  
Less far above, the singing of the nuns  
From Santa Trinità came floating down,  
And at my feet the quaint boat-fountain's plash  
Sang to my ears a more familiar song.  
While we have sun we do not quite despair,  
Not yet a " Miserere " woke to life  
Its wailing echoes in my broken heart.

Sitting there, watching of the passers-by,  
Wondering ever, " Will he come this way ?  
Or is he artist ? Does he seek a face ?  
And may my face perhaps be what he seeks ? "  
Casting my eyes down, he might see the lids,  
Raising them sudden, he may see their light ;—  
All this I tell you from no new conceit,  
The trick is born in me and in my kind :  
I was a girl again, save that I held  
A warm soft arm-full close against my heart.  
Staring with curious eyes so wide and blue  
And golden hair for catching of the sun—  
My English boy, your face is far too fair  
For lying on so dark a breast as mine.

Not long we sat. Battista told no lie ;  
Who that could paint would pass my little boy ?  
With swift, glad steps before the set of sun  
Homeward we sped together as we came,  
But now no longer pitiful and poor.

At first he frowned, my husband, as I feared,  
But, later, kissed me, with a face half-turned :

And on the morrow, when I craved a boon,  
 "Just say, 'God speed you,' to the boy and me!"  
 He said it sadly, but with half a smile.

I could go on to tell you many things  
 That came about in days that followed next,  
 But that I fear to weary you indeed,  
 And vex your hearing with my lengthened plaint;  
 I will but lead you to a certain day  
 Since when all days have been the same to me.

Since I betook me to the Spanish steps  
 We never lacked for food, or less or more;  
 For me it was enough, and for the child,  
 And poor Battista found his "better times;"  
 But he, my husband had known better far,  
 And then the pride, that fearful English thing,  
 Gnawed at his heart when hunger ceased to pinch.  
 It fretted half his life out in those days  
 To lean his helplessness on me, his wife.

More grave he grew, more stern from morn to morn;  
 I, frightened, sometimes, when I read his face.  
 "Will he be hard upon the child?" I thought,  
 "When he is older to know love from hate?"  
 When he is older!—Did some angel keep  
 My eyes from reading all the tale of grief?  
 If so, still well: the step by step is hard,  
 It would be harder could we see the whole.

An English stranger chanced at length to come,  
 Bringing a friend to see and criticise.  
 "Then you are not of Tenerani's school?"  
 Indeed, I wonder, and so young a man;  
 But artists nowadays will take no help.  
 They must be well-to-do who trust to whim  
 And have no master to fall back upon.  
 Your things are bold maybe, conception good,  
 Great cleverness and force at times I see,  
 But polish, you want polish, and a school,  
 A larger field, more subjects, better blocks:  
 And then the workmen—are your workmen good?  
 This bust will lie for ever on your hands,  
 That blueness showing close behind the ear:  
 Try it again, my friend, the face is good,  
 And marble plentiful, as buyers too.  
 Never be sparse, but do things handsomely.  
 I have a slave by Tadolini here,  
 Come in and see it, it may help you on.  
 But this—this face—whose is it? Ay, your wife's?  
 My friend, I tell you this is quite sublime!  
 Your wife is with you? you will bring her too?  
 This evening we shall hope to see our friends."

"T was I besought him "O my husband, go!  
 Who knows but God may keep us still a friend?"

"T was he that answered with a bitter smile,  
 "Have you then lived so blindly that you hold  
 Among the rich the poor should find that thing?"  
 'T was I again that said, "But gains for work!  
 And if you get but work the gains must come:  
 O go, my husband, for the boy's sweet sake!"

Then he, "Why say you 'go?' will you not come?  
 Nay, but you shall, or nothing moves me hence."  
 I pleaded long in vain, "For I," I said,  
 "Should shame you only that are gentle-born:  
 You would not have me mocked at by these rich?  
 For though you taught me how to speak your tongue,  
 My manners surely would but raise a jest.  
 Your wife I am, God knows! but not a wife  
 To stand up boldly in the light of day  
 Thrusting my shadow between you and fame.  
 Mistake me not—for I am proud as you;  
 Proud of my wifeship, as a queen is proud.  
 But that is here, at home, or in the shed;  
 Seeking me so, they find me at your side.  
 But if I go to them who would have you  
 And cry 'Me also—me!' with childish greed,  
 It comes thereafter, as the babe might tell,  
 They 'dropping me' must lose their hold of you."

"But you are bidden!" so he ever said:  
 And thus it fell when streets were all alight,  
 The child asleep, a neighbour on the watch,  
 I crept beside him 'neath the star-set blue.  
 How still the Piazza was, how black the Dome!  
 Only the plash of falling waters came  
 Fitful and silvery on the calm night air.  
 Passing a lamp that served to light the way,  
 I looked up sudden in my husband's face:  
 He looking down as sudden met my look,  
 And smiled upon me with his grave sweet smile.  
 To you that smile is nothing—but for me  
 It was the sweetest smile, because the last.

We neared a grand Palazzo: half a mile  
 Of well-fed restless horses pawed the stones  
 And chafed the silvered bridles at their mouth:  
 And ever the long line, as some great snake,  
 Drew itself up to lengthen out beyond.  
 In the great door-way haughty serving-men  
 Glanced at us coldly and with some mistrust,  
 But whispered not at all, for we were far  
 Below the level of their common talk.

A moment as we climbed the marble stair  
 Whose coldness minded me how ill the feet  
 Were covered, that made bold to pass that way,

I paused—and looking up the second time  
Pleaded, “My husband, it is not too late—  
If I may shame you, tell me, and I go!”  
And once again most patiently he said,  
“Are you not bidden, and my wife to boot?”

There was no time for answer; open doors  
A hum of voices and a blaze of light  
Snatched at my breath, as I my husband's hand.

Was I set up with my new-trie'd estate,  
Think you, that after we had past the door  
No more I troubled of my fitness there,  
But my two eyes bespoke my every thought?  
If so, not very long I failed to find  
Some friends to mind me what myself forgot.  
We stood apart a little, and I gazed  
At gems in diadems, and silken gear,  
But mostly at the English women round:  
That wondrous pink and white unknown to us  
Save by our roses; and that golden hair  
Such as our dark-eyed painters used to love.  
Kind faces, too, they had, these women fair—  
“Are their hearts soft?” I questioned, “as their hands?”  
And now of one, still musing, “Is she wife?”  
And of that other, “Has she, too, a son?”  
Or, “If she saw my little English boy,  
Would she say smiling, ‘He is one of us?’”  
And with that thought was wedded yet a thought  
Of what the future's year-books should unfold  
For him, my son, my first-born, my sweet child.  
And from that wedlock sprang a hundred thoughts  
That, crowding in upon me, mazed my sight  
So that I failed to mark the sweep of skirts,  
The passing to and fro, the jest, the laugh,  
The song of singers in a farther room  
Whose deepest depths and highest flights alone  
Pierced through the weary changeless hum of talk.

Changeless, I said. On sudden, though, it changed;  
Grew lower first, then louder—low again—  
And faces turned upon me, no more kind,  
But wearing strange new looks I had not seen.  
What had I done? Perhaps my foot had trod  
Unconsciously upon the flow of silk  
Was snatched so sudden with so fine a hand,  
The wearer moving off with stately step  
And face averted, casting yet a glance  
Part curious, part scornful, into mine:  
The woman's nature battling as it seemed  
The high-bred lady's finer sense of scorn.

And whispers were exchanged around me now,  
That soon grew fainter, for the whisperers,



As if enchanted, turned them, one by one,  
 To leave me standing 'wildered and apart.  
 Where was he now, my husband?—and what meant  
 The words I heard in pauses of the hum?  
 —“A *model*, did you say? A *model here*?  
 We thought our host more mindful for his friends.”

Dull at perceiving you will say I am;  
 And it is true, I think, for yet a while  
 It took my slow-winged reason to attain  
 This height of fancy—that myself was cause  
 Of all this tumult in that calm-browed race:  
 That virtuous husbands armed their wives away  
 From touching me, my skirt, my sleeve-string's end—  
 That when they said “A *model*!” in low voice,  
 It meant a hundred thunders on my head,  
 A hundred-hundred insults heaped on theirs.

It is not strange I marvelled. I am free  
 From any taint that mars our womanhood.  
 Such sins as I have done, God knows them all,  
 And he, the Padre Pietro, knows them too:  
 Not few they are in number, though not great  
 As sins are counted in this sinful world.  
 A truth not every whit the truth, I mind—  
 A word of anger to Francesca, when  
 She jeered me, mocking at my “English lord”—  
 A Festa, when I failed the morning mass,  
 Because my husband would to Tivoli,  
 To keep it gaily if less godly there:  
 And once that, seeing him go by the door,  
 I rose, my prayer half ended, half my beads  
 Untold, and in my impious haste forgot  
 To cross my forehead, or to kiss the shrine.  
 Displacing heavenly loves for loves of earth,  
 Mother of Jesus, did I lose thy smile?

“A *model*!” so it rose and fell again  
 That whisper fraught with meaning on my ear.  
 Sight failed me when I strove to look around,  
 For him that never failed me, but was kind.  
 His hands met mine stretched blindly out to his,  
 And stronger from the touch, my feet moved on  
 Out of the tumult, into night again.

We spoke no word, as through the darken'd street  
 We trod so proudly, that were smote so sore.  
 What use to speak, cast forth of fellow-men  
 To other men as cruel as their kind?  
 What use to murmur in the other's ear  
 Of love that, long assayed, forgot to doubt?  
 What use to toss wild wailings up to God  
 Who hears our silence as man hears our speech?

I think that Thou didst hear in that dark hour,  
That Thou, across immeasurable space,  
Didst stoop Thee, leaning past the nearest star.  
The night indeed, of late so calmly sweet,  
So hallowed, holy, pregnant of good things,  
Hung there above us, all its sweetness robbed,  
Unheeding, passionless, sublimely cold.  
O night ! and could you be the selfsame thing,  
All blue and stars and gladness, that before  
Had spoke your speechless language to our hearts ?  
Speechless, yet breathing "Peace," as if it spoke,  
Just as the angels when the Christ was born.

But He is brighter than the nearest star,  
And kinder than the children of His breast ;  
And when the night is silent, as is man,  
He makes the silence His great instrument.  
I think that when we stand alone, apart,  
He has more room for showing us His face.

I speak to Him. What use to speak to you ?  
I had not spoke indeed to tell this tale  
But for my fellows, whom you else might harm ;  
But for the little children yet unborn,  
That being born into so low estate  
Should earn perhaps your pity : and your scorn  
Learn to be juster in the course it takes.

Sin I would have you flee from, as from plague,  
Hating the garment spotted by its touch ;  
Yet not so rudely snatching yours away  
As that you trip the wearer of the first.  
And see, I pray you, that at times it falls  
Our garment may be spotted, yet ourselves  
Be pure as you are, and perhaps more kind.  
God sets us in our place, and there we bide,  
And some on dainty carpets have their path  
Where feet nor garment can be tinged or soiled ;  
Where sounds of woe and sinning in the world  
Reach not the ears as fine as they are deaf.  
But some far otherwise are planted down  
In narrow hedge-rows, in the mire of sin,  
Where is so little daylight that I think  
The angels sometimes fail to find the way.

It is no wonder then that such as you,  
Should shrink affrighted from so foul a thing ;  
Nor is it wonder that, so planted down,  
A little dust should gather on our hem  
Albeit the soul and body are as pure  
As when God gave us to our mother's breast—  
That you should brand us with a class-disgrace  
Because among us there are those that sin.

Enough—for you are weary as am I—  
 My story rushes headlong to the close.  
 It minds me of a scarf my mother knit  
 With patient labour many summers days ;  
 As many thousand stitches deftly formed  
 Before it gained a pattern and a shape ;  
 When on a day some meddling childish hand  
 Cut but a thread, and in an instant's time  
 The work of patience and of weeks ran out.

We reached our home ; my husband sat him down,  
 Pallid and silent as his marble blocks ;  
 And so for many days, without a change,  
 Although I strove to comfort him ; indeed,  
 To laugh our sorrow down, to weep, to jest :  
 Though I besieged him, kneeling at his feet,  
 And warmed his fingers with my hottest kiss,  
 Pleading, "Take comfort, we have still the child !"   
 In better times he used to say, "Forbear !  
 It is not seemly that you kiss my hand,  
 No man's is worthy of a woman's lips."  
 But now in vain I waited to be chid,  
 He did not speak, nor move his hand at all—  
 Pleading, "I care not, therefore care not you !"   
 Pleading, "My husband, sin alone despairs !  
 Will you not rouse you, if but just to pray,  
 Or lay your fingers on the baby's head ?"

But all my tricks and pleadings were in vain.  
 Not the boy's prattle reached his sullen ear,  
 Not my coin'd laughter, nor my truer grief.  
 And after many days he sought his bed,  
 And turned him sadly to the plastered wall.

Sad, did I say ? indeed I meant not sad.  
 Would God that sadness, or some other thing  
 Had crossed the fearful stillness of his face  
 Before that nightfall, when he turned again  
 And would have beckoned had I not been near.  
 "Felicità," he said, "my brave true wife,  
 Hold by my hand a little while I speak,  
 And lean your face more closely near to mine.  
 I do not fear to tell you that you know—  
 That I am passing out of life and sight ;  
 For you that listen are more strong than he  
 Who cannot speak so calmly as he would.  
 Felicità, when I am gone away  
 Grieve just a little, as I trow you must,  
 But after, gird you, lay me in the ground,  
 And flee this city, shaking off the dust,  
 As said San Paolo, if I mind me right :  
 For they are cruel, they would brand my wife,  
 Until she deemed herself the thing they say.

And for the boy, my son, that bears my name,  
Will he not stand you in the stead of me ?  
Ay, better too, for if you guard him well  
He shall be whole of heart and stout of limb,  
As I was never since a year gone by.  
Teach him, Felicità, to shun the rich,  
The so-called noble that have wrought our wrong ;  
Nor ever in his direst straits to stoop  
To pick such charities as they may drop  
To us, the crossing-sweepers of their path."

" But you forgive them now ? " I questioned low,  
" You mind the story we so often hear  
Of Him reviled, reviling not again ? "

" I do forgive them for myself," he said ;  
" But for the wrong to you and to the child——"  
" That *I* forgive," I cried, " for him and me ! "

After awhile, when he had blessed our boy,  
And I had kissed him thrice and thrice again,  
Thinking of every kiss,—“ It is the last,  
Let it be long, as last, last kisses should——”  
His breathing quickened, and I said in haste—  
“ My husband, suffer that I call the priest ! ”  
“ No, no ! ” he cried. “ No priest avails for me ;  
For if so shortly face to face with God  
I take my standing, it can little help  
A priest should send me where he cannot come.  
My saint that used to be, my priest that is,  
Felicita, present my soul to God !  
Plead that He may receive it. Let us pray.”

We prayed. The night wore on. I think he dreamed ;  
For up he lifted his white hands, and cried—  
“ Master, the work is finished ! Take it home !  
And do not pay me by my poor deserts  
As those that call themselves by Thy dear name ;  
But from the beauty of Thy holiness  
Lend this a beauty that is not its own ! ”

So he went hence ; and so my tale is told.

C. C. FRASER-TYTLER.

## TINTORETTO AT HOME.

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It is impossible for a sojourner in Venice to have spent hours in front of those colossal canvases of Tintoretto,—some portion of whose history was recounted by the present writer in a former paper in these pages,—hours which have gradually brought him into something like personal acquaintance with that wonderful man, without longing for some details of the sort of life passed by him in that small, but not inelegant dwelling, which, as has already been pointed out in the paper referred to, may still be discovered by the curious in a distant and out-of-the-way quarter of the strangely beautiful sea city.

But little can be found to gratify this desire. But some fragments may be gathered by a careful searcher for them. And as this gathering has never yet been done, as far as the present writer is aware, and any English inquirer is little likely to have the time and means needed for doing it for himself, it may perhaps be not unacceptable, that it should be done for him here.

The house in which the painter passed the latter years of his life, and in which he died, has been described, and its whereabouts indicated, in the before-mentioned paper. The contract of purchase, bearing date the 8th of June, 1574,—executed by Pietro Episcopi, his father-in-law, on his behalf—is still extant. There is also extant a return made by him of his property for the purpose of taxation, in which the rent of the house is stated at twenty ducats a month, subject to deduction on account of a mortgage to the amount of five hundred ducats, bearing interest at six per cent., due to the person from whom the property was bought. The above estimate of the value of the house at twenty ducats a month is a startling one. The ducat was about equal to ten shillings, and it is generally held that the nominal value of money at the beginning of the sixteenth century must be multiplied at least by ten, in order to find its worth in the nominal value of our own day. And thus calculating it, we should have the rent of Tintoretto's small house stated at £1,200 a year in our present money—which is of course utterly out of the question. It is true that the return states the rent at twenty ducats, without any such word as “monthly” or “annually.” And if, as to our notions would seem a matter of course, the *annual* value were intended, the rent of the house would have been equivalent to £100 of our money, which is quite as much as one would have supposed. But there is this difficulty. How could a mortgage, the annual interest of which was thirty ducats, be secured on a property the

annual rent of which was twenty ducats ? And that in a country where mortgages are never permitted to approach so nearly to the limit of the value of the property mortgaged as they often do with us. It is clear that this could not be. In my difficulty on the subject I carried the passage of the return to my friend Signor Velludo, the able and always obliging librarian of St. Mark's library. And he at once declared that the twenty ducats named in the return must be understood to be the monthly value, and that such a manner of speaking was quite in accordance with Venetian habitudes. Still it is totally impossible to suppose that the small house in question in a distant quarter of Venice was worth the equivalent of £1,200 a year ! And we can only come to the conclusion, either that the return was a fictitious one, or that whatever may have been the case in other communities where money was scarcer, the rule of multiplying nominal amounts of the sixteenth century by ten, in order to find the equivalent value in the money of our own day must be wholly fallacious as regards the wealthy commercial city of Venice. Nevertheless the former explanation seems to be the more probable one. And other facts relative to the methods in use at that period for rating property for the purpose of taxation seem to show that such is likely to have been the case. I believe upon the whole that the value of the house stated at twenty ducats was meant to be the yearly value ; but that that sum was *very* far below the real value probably to the extent of being only a third part of it. And it is to be observed that this under valuation could not have been at all events altogether fraudulent, inasmuch as the return contains on the face of it the statement, that a mortgage of which the annual interest was thirty ducats was secured on the property. We must conclude, therefore, that it was systematical and recognised that the return for rating was in all cases very much below the real value.

Tintoretto returns himself as the possessor also of a small farm situated in the immediate neighbourhood of Mestre, of which the produce (payable from the farmer to the landlord) was seventeen quarters of wheat and fourteen tuns of wine, and as *honoraries* due from the farmer according to custom, one goose, fifty eggs, two pairs of hens, two pairs of chickens, and one ham. On this farm there was also a mortgage of four hundred ducats at six per cent.

Tintoretto left his property to his wife for her life, and then to his children generally with, as it should seem, certain powers of appointment by the widow. The painter had two sons, Domenico and Marco, and five daughters, Marietta, two named Ottavia, Perinna, and Laura. Domenico, well-known as a more than respectable artist, who worked with and assisted his father in several of his later works, especially in the great "*Paradiso*," in the *Sala del Maggiore Consiglio*, eventually became the owner and occupier of the house in Venice. Marco seems to have been a neer-do-weel. And his mother exercised

in respect to him the right of "conditioning"—as the phrase in her will has it—his share of his father's property. He is left in fact in a sort of tutelage to the discretion of his brother Domenico. Nothing further is heard of him.

Marietta, whom we shall have occasion to return to again, died before her father, in 1590, at the age of thirty. She was married to one Mario Augusta a jeweller (reckoned in those days as much entitled to rank as an *artist* as a painter), but she does not seem to have left any offspring.

Perinna and one of the Ottavias became nuns in the convent of St. Ann, in Venice. They are by the widow's will recommended to the care of their brother Domenico. These two poor women piously worked in silk embroidery a copy of their father's great picture of the Crucifixion, at St. Rocco, for an altar-covering for the chapel of their convent. And there remained a constant tradition among the sisterhood that one of them became blind (as may well be believed) from labouring in that truly tremendous task. Zabeo saw this embroidery in 1818. Of Laura nothing is known save that she survived—but probably not for many years—her father and her mother.

The other Ottavia was married to a German painter of the name of Casser; and she became ultimately the possessor of the family property. Domenico had intended to bequeath the house in which his father had lived and laboured, together with the large, and at that day important, collection of casts from the antique and from the works of Michael Angelo, as an academy for the painters of Venice. But he was led to change his mind; and by will, dated 20th of October, 1630, left the entire property to his sister Ottavia, the wife of Sebastian Casser. Domenico died in 1637. Ottavia outlived all her brothers and sisters, and by a will, dated 8th October, 1645, bequeathed everything to her husband. And by their lineal descendants the house was possessed and inhabited up to the year 1885, and a year or two longer. In that year it was occupied by two brothers, Angelo and Andrea Casser. But very shortly afterwards it passed to persons of another name and family. It would seem, however, either that Sebastian Casser, the German painter, had relatives of the same name settled in Venice in the fifteenth century, or that there are still many descendants of Tintoretto living. For Casser is at the present day by no means an uncommon name in Venice.

The long room at the top of the house, which tradition declares to have been the studio of the painter, is still pointed out, though the great changes which the interior of the house has evidently undergone render one rather sceptical as to any very accurate certainty on this subject. We hear much from the contemporaries of the great painter, or more immediately from those who came after them in the succeeding generation, of the solitariness of Tintoretto's habits in his studio,

of the jealousy with which he excluded visitors, and of the secrecy he maintained with respect to the processes used by him. All this was entirely in accordance with the common notions and practices of that day, not only as regarded the art of painting, but as regarded every other art and even handicraft. It was an age when artisans and artists *had* to discover processes and methods for themselves; and when they had succeeded in doing so, it is intelligible that they should have been anxious to reap the whole advantage of their discoveries. And of course the next thing that occurred in natural sequence was that an immense amount of humbug mixed itself up with the matter. Tintoretto *did* employ novel processes—unfortunately, as has been explained in a former article—and they were processes (adopted with a view to increased speed in execution) which he may well have been unwilling that others should spy the secret of. It were to be wished much that the secret had remained one, and had died with him! We should not then have been vexed by all the black canvases of the school of the *tenebrosi*! The genius, the creative imagination, the power that *did* die with him, no spying into the secrets of his workshop could have made the spys any the better for.

And, after all, Tintoretto may have had abundance of other reasons than jealousy of his secrets to make a stern rule against intrusion beyond the sacred threshold of his studio. He was wont to spend many hours there, even when not at work, in solitary meditation. And many anecdotes were current, which show that he could ill brook the importunity of blockheads, when his mind and fancy were busy with the work of creation. When he was painting the great picture of the “Paradiso,” a work which could not be executed in any ordinary studio, it was impossible to prevent, at all events, the senators of the Republic from coming to look at the progress of the work. Upon one occasion a knot of these grandees, after watching him at work for awhile, ventured to ask why he made such large sweeps of the brush, when it was well known that Titian, Bellini, &c., had been content to work with comparatively minute touches. “It must be,” said the over-taxed artist, looking up from his work into the face of his persecutors, “because those lucky fellows had not so many visitors to drive them nearly out of their senses!”

Nevertheless, the elegant little home at the foot of the Ponte di Mori was by no means a cheerless or dull abode. The life within it offered a very striking and favourable contrast to that which might have been observed in the home that poor unhappy Andrea del Sarto made for himself. Tintoretto's home life was essentially, we learn from Ridolfi, and may glean from other sources, a sober, dignified, and staid one. It was an age when cakes and ale were abundant, especially at Venice—an age of license and much riotous living. But from all such roistering Tintoretto held himself entirely aloof. But none the less, as has been said, were there happy home hours of



genial intercourse and cheerful pleasure in Tintoretto's home. Music formed a leading feature of those pleasant hours. The old man was himself a performer, and had invented sundry improvements in various instruments.

But doubtless the great centre of attraction and the animating soul of those happy evenings was the painter's gifted daughter Marietta. Marietta was born in 1560, and was therefore fourteen years old when the house at the foot of the Ponte di Mori was purchased. And sixteen years after that purchase she died, as we know, a wife. But it would seem that notwithstanding her marriage she remained an inmate of her father's house. There are many indications of her having been, at all events, an habitual frequenter of it; and we know that she died in it.

Laura also was doubtless an inmate of her father's house, and a member of the pleasant society to be found there. Ottavia, the German artist's wife, was naturally often there with her husband. The two other daughters—the two poor nuns—were of course in their convent.

But Marietta was, as has been said, the soul and leading spirit of the artistic gathering in her father's house. How great a promise she had already given in her father's art—nay, how much she had already achieved—when snatched away by an early death, is well known to all students of the history of art. But Marietta was also highly gifted as a musician. She was a player on the lute, and on the *gravicembali*. Giulio Zacchino, a Neapolitan, had been her master in music. But a musician of much higher name than he was an habitual frequenter of the musical evenings at Tintoretto's house. This was Giuseppe Zarlino, of Chioggia, who from 1565 to 1590 was chapel-master at St. Mark's. Zarlino, in the language of those who insist upon carrying the idea of a "renaissance" into every department of human culture, is reckoned among the great *restorers* of music. It is not very easy to see what there was to *restore*. And perhaps it would be more to the purpose to say that he was one of the fathers and creators of modern music.

But, be this as it may, there was the old chapel-master to be found enjoying probably some of the happiest hours of his life. Another noted judge and lover of good music, who frequented these pleasant gatherings, was the painter Jacopo da Ponti, more generally known by the nickname Bassano; for he and Tintoretto were excellent good friends, despite the skits that the mighty idealist would sometimes indulge in at the expense of his friend's realism. "You had better go to Bassano!" he said once to a silly fellow, who came to him to have his portrait painted, saying, "I am a fool, you know—*una bestia*—and you must paint me as one!" "Oh! *una bestia*, are you? Well in that case you had better go to Bassano; he will paint you to the very life!" And the blockhead went away with this recom-

mentation to Bassano. But Bassano came none the less for his feast of music to the house of his old rival and friend.

Alessandro Vittoria, the sculptor, whose works may still be seen almost in every parish of Venice, was a frequent visitor. The sculptor was a great lover of gardening, and would come fresh from his garden in the Calle di Picta, where he had been at work for an evening hour or two. And there were two other guests of the house, who must not be left unmentioned, if only for the strange contrast they presented to each other—a contrast so violent that the sense of it would not unfrequently deter one of the two from presenting himself in Tintoretto's well-ordered home.

Every sort of propriety requires that in mentioning this contrasted pair the precedence should be given to the magnificent Paolo Cagliari, better known, at least in England, as Paolo Veronese. The man in this case answers very accurately to the ideas that might be formed of him from his pictures. He was in every point of view magnificent; yet he was withal a thrifty man, and far more eager about the money value of his works than was our Tintoretto. He, too, was a man of a great and gorgeous imagination; but he was not lavishly prodigal of this creative wealth as was Tintoretto; nor was his wealth of imagination of the same kind. Gorgeous palaces, with vast distances of colonnaded perspectives, the bravery of courts, cloth of silver and cloth of gold, satins, brocades, pearls and jewels, and splendour of all kinds seem to have formed the world in which his imagination best loved to expatiate. Would his imagination have ever been excited to creative activity at all, if he had been placed in circumstances where none of these things had been accessible to him? It may, perhaps, be doubted. Would any combination of exterior circumstances have availed to quench the fire of creative faculty in the other? There can hardly be any doubt as to the fitting reply. There had at one time been a feeling of no slight rivalry between Tintoretto and the younger aspirant, who was taking the suffrages of the Venetians by storm, whose tastes and idiosyncrasies were so curiously analogous to his own. Paul Veronese was twenty-six years younger than Tintoretto; and he had shot up into a reputation and position of the first order with much greater rapidity than Tintoretto had done. There had been wherewithal to excite jealousy; but it is pleasant to think that nothing had ever passed between them which prevented the younger man from frequenting the house of the elder as a guest. Paolo, we are told, especially affected splendour of attire. It is specially mentioned that he always wore velvet breeches. His manners, too, were courtly and magnificent. Perhaps it may be allowable to conjecture that the liveliest and pleasantest evenings in the house at the foot of the Ponte di Mori were not those when the gorgeous Paolo honoured the assembly with his presence.

At all events there was one who sometimes ventured to count so

far on the tolerance of fellow artists towards a brother of the brush of undeniable talent and merit, as to show himself half-shamefacedly in the circle at Tintoretto's house, but who could never dare to do so if he knew that the magnificent Paolo, with his velvet breeches, was to be present. This was poor Andrea Schiavoni, a veritable Bohemian of the Bohemians. How could the magnificence of velvet breeches assort with raggedness, which sometimes approached the point of having none at all! What sort of society could there be between the frequenter of the lordliest palaces of Venice, the caressed associate of proud patricians and noble dames, and the poor Bohemian reeking from the society of a miserable pot-house? I do not find any special delinquencies charged against this unfortunate Andrea Schiavoni as the cause of the miserable life he led. And assuredly his talent was of a quality that ought to have secured to him a comfortable maintenance and an honourable position in society. But have we not all, alas! known men who seem inevitably predestined to be and to remain to the bitter end poor devils? Andrea Schiavoni was one of these; incurably from his cradle to his grave a poor devil! He was never seen otherwise than ragged, patched, dirty, and disreputable looking. Sometimes he was on the verge of starvation. His pictures were ill-paid,—not in proportion to their merit, but in proportion to his recognised position as a poor devil. Nevertheless the poor devil liked, when he could achieve some comparative degree of decency, and when he knew that Veronese the magnificent with his too imposing velvet breeches was not to be there, to find, as an oasis in his troubled life, a few hours of tranquil enjoyment beneath the hospitable roof of Tintoretto. The dreaded presence of the superb Paolo would, doubtless, be indicated by his gondola moored under the wall of the canal, and waiting for its master in front of Tintoretto's house. Of course Veronese came in his gondola. Perhaps also the old chapel-master came in his. The others would more probably walk. Certainly Alexandro, the sculptor, came afoot from his garden in the Calle di Picta. The small hours, doubtless, had begun to be chimed from the neighbouring convent of the Madonna dell' Orto before the party separated. Hours were always late in Venice (as they are to the present day), the old Venetian life having been curiously and characteristically contrasted in this respect with the life in thrifty, save-all Florence.

What a pity it is that the old chroniclers and biographers and letter-writers did not tell us a few more of the things we should so much like to be told, in the place of the masses of fact that do not interest us at all. At all events our posterity can make no such complaint of us. For, not knowing exactly what may most interest them, we leave everything on record for their curiosity. The pleasant little picture of these *noctes cœnaque deum* in the house at the foot of the Ponte di Mori is a glimpse, a fleeting peep into the phan-

tasmagoric lantern of the past, constructed out of mere words dropped here and there by chance, slight indications which fell from the writer's pen when he was intent on recording far other matters, and rendered possible only by assiduous and careful gleaning and piecing together, eked out by somewhat of guess-work. But we know at least what sort of moonlight it was—at least we who have "swum in a gondola" on the moonlit lagoon know—what a moonlight it was that lighted the little party home, and poured its flood of silver on the white Istrian marble of the canal front of the old artist's house. The three-arched gothic windows of the large saloon had, no doubt, all its three casements opened to the sweet night air, and was garnished each by a gracious head, as the daughters of the host bade their guests "Good night!" Old Giuseppe Zarlino, the chapel-master, I think, offered a place in his gondola to Ser Jacopo da Ponte as a recognised lover and *intendente di musica*. Schiavoni slunk off alone, turning as quickly as might be into some narrow *calle* that hid him from the too-peering moonlight.

"What think you, Messer Giuseppe, of our old friend's scheme for adding to the sonority of the mandoline?" says Bassano, as he takes his place by the side of the old *maestro* in the gondola.

"Hum!" returns the old man doubtfully, "there is not much in it, *mi pare*, one way or the other! It may be an improvement on the old form. But I have reached a time of life, *Jacopo mio*, when one thinks more of old practice than of new-fangled inventions."

"But did not La Marietta give us that last *toccata* in a manner that was perfectly heavenly; such a grace of touch, such an expression! I could not help thinking of one of those angels of old Bellini in the chapel at the Frari as I looked at her and listened to her!"

"Ay, indeed, you may say so! Marietta is a phoenix, *rara avis in terris*—in truth a nonsuch!" replies the old chapel-master with enthusiasm. "I expect great things from Marietta; and you, *Jacopo mio*, must expect great things too; you in your art and I in mine. I don't know another case of such a mastery as Marietta Robusti has in both arts at once."

There was many a competent authority in Venice then who expected great things from Marietta. But, alas! all such expectations were fated to be disappointed; and the last of those pleasant evenings in the little house at the foot of the Ponte de Mori was at hand. Marietta Robusti was doomed, as the reader already knows, to an early death. She fell into ill-health and died at the age of thirty, in 1590, just four years before the death of her bereaved old father. But before she died there occurred in that house one of the most moving and saddest scenes that its walls can ever have been witnesses to in all the four or five centuries of its existence. On her death-bed, when it became certain that her life would not be spared, the despairing father determined to possess such a portrait of his

daughter as his all but octogenarian hand could still well execute. And the old man painted the portrait of his gifted child, with whom so many hopes were extinguished, as she lay there dying. Surely never was so sad a picture painted !

Marietta was buried in the noble church of the neighbouring monastery of Madonna dell' Orto, where, after the lapse of four more years, her father rejoined her. They were buried in the vault belonging to the Episcopi family, to which Tintoretto's wife belonged, which was under the choir. The church, which had fallen so much into decay that it was threatened with complete ruin, has recently been restored, not injudiciously or unsuccessfully, at the cost of the Italian Government. The works are not yet quite completed, but when they are, they will include a fitting monument to the extraordinary man whose dust rests between the two wonderful pictures with which the first youthful ardour of his genius covered the huge side walls of the choir, that was to receive his remains when his matchless career should have been run.

T. A. TROLLOPE.

## THE AMBER-CALIFORNIA.

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CARLYLE, in his history of Frederick the Great, writing of the ancient inhabitants of East Prussia, enunciates this characteristic sentence, "Dryasdust knows only that these *Preussen* were a strong-boned, iracund herdsman and fisher people; highly averse to be interfered with, in their religion especially. Famous otherwise, through all the centuries, for the *amber* they had been used to fish, and sell in foreign parts."

This amber was well known to the writers of classical antiquity as a natural production of the Baltic shores. Its value was rated as high as that of gold and precious stones. The Phœnicians navigated the North seas in quest of it; and tried to keep its locality a mystery. Its curious property of attracting substances by friction was not among its most trivial notabilities, and caused the adoption of its Greek name, *ἤλεκτρον*, for the nomenclature of the most marvellous of modern sciences. Up to quite recent times its origin and composition have been as perplexing a *crux* to physical inquirers as the origin of the Nile has to geographical inquirers. The poets of old had their way of accounting for it, as to-day's man of science has his. The tears of Phaëton's sisters, they said, those sisters whom grief for their brother's fall had metamorphosed into trees, in their descent from the enchanted trunks had become congealed, and acquired the appearance of gold-coloured transparencies. If, as some have suggested, the river Eridanus, into which the rash charioteer of the sun fell, was not the Italian Po, but a small river bearing the same Latin name, which runs its course near Dantzic, there would seem to have been some method in the fancy of this fable. Nevertheless, science, speaking through the mouth of Zaddack, of Berent, and of other recent sages, brings forward a somewhat different interpretation of the "amber riddle." An interpretation how far more exciting, in reality, to the imaginative contemplation of the earth's inhabitant! It runs thus.

At a remote epoch of creation, classified by geologists as the Tertiary Period, a mighty pine forest covered vast portions of the northern continent. A resin, so rapid in its flow as to catch forms of insect life in every moment of action, exuded from these pines, and congealed as rapidly. By some natural-historic process not yet fully cleared up, these masses of resin were detached from their parent trees, and became submerged under the great Tertiary sea, where a stratum of bluish clay formed round them. Then came the subsequent strata of diluvial and alluvial periods, and the peninsula of

Samland, rising gradually from the waters, held buried under it a portion of the amber treasure, while other portions of it stretch beneath the basin of the Baltic from Memel to Pillau.

The peninsula of Samland forms the north-eastern boundary of the Gulf of Dantzig, and lies between two large fresh-water lakes, which constitute in fact the most remarkable phenomena in the physical geography of Prussia. These lakes are separated from the sea each by a *Nehrung*, so-called, a very narrow, low strip of land. The largest of the lakes, the Curisches Haff (or sea), named after the ancient tribe of the Cures, who once inhabited its banks, is sixty-six miles long and from fifteen to thirty miles broad. The Frisches Haff, to the south-west of it, is nearly as long, but narrower. The Samland peninsula ends in a bold, storm-beaten promontory called the Brusterort, on which stands a lighthouse. The inner coast of this peninsula, abutting on the Frisches Haff, is verdant and fertile, and has been called the paradise of East Prussia. At its junction with the mainland stands Königsberg, the ancient Prussian capital. The Curisches Haff joins the sea at the roadstead of Memel, the border town of Prussia on its north-easterly limit. A mile and a half from Memel, in the Curische Nehrung, stands the little bathing-place of Schwarzort, which has long had its visitors for pleasure or for health.

There was an account of the amber-fishery in one of last year's numbers of the *Gartenlaube*, a well known German periodical, from which we shall proceed to extract some interesting particulars. Till within five-and-thirty years ago the royal dues on the production of this amphibious product were farmed out to certain monopolists who kept the sea-board in terror with the exactions of their officers. The so-called "Coast Cossacks" (*Strand Kosaken*) were a grievance not only to the peasants and fishermen of the neighbourhood, but also to the visitors who took up their sojourn for a season at the Baths of Schwarzort, and who were liable to be seized and searched on their return from aquatic pleasure parties. In the year 1897 King Frederick William III. made over his rights to the needy peasantry of the district, in return for a small fixed tribute. The new proprietors set diligently to work to extract the precious deposit, but they were acquainted only with the traditional methods of operation, such as hauling it in from the shore, or fishing it up from the sea depths in boats, or digging it here and there from its inland recesses. These operations are still carried on, though in portions of the amber regions enterprise and machinery have superseded them, as we shall presently have to recount.

On rough autumn days, when the north-east wind blows keenly, freezing the spray as it falls, the coastmen of Samland will rush into the sea with their nets, and toss the treasure which the waves bring up to the women and children who wait on the beach to sift the tangled mass and separate the amber from the "amber-weed," by

which it is invariably encompassed. But the heavier masses of amber are rarely driven in by wind and tide. They are reserved for the boatmen's operations on the calm summer mornings, when peering eagerly into the glassy green waters, they plunge their hooks and pitchforks into some promising mass of rock and sea-weed, which they drag by main force within the compass of their nets.

In 1862 an enterprising firm of small traders at Memel, Stantien and Becker, came forward with a proposition which proved very acceptable to the local authorities of the Königsberg Circle. Hitherto it had been a constant source of expense to these officials to clear out the accumulations of mud which from time to time choked the Memel roadstead at the entrance of the Curisches Haff. Stantien and Becker offered to perform the operation at their own expense, and to pay a sum of twenty-five thalers per working day into the bargain, in exchange for the possession of all the amber to be found within the sphere of their operations. Forthwith the establishments of the new company sprung up at Schwarzort—the San Francisco of the new East Prussian California, as the “East Prussian,” who writes the account in the *Gartenlaube*, styles the little settlement. No less than twelve dredging machines were at work last year. The process by which they effect their object is this. First a channel is driven into the mud of the lake, the mud being cast aside into boxes covered with a grating, till the solid ground of the amber stratum is reached. Into this channel buckets, alternately solid and perforated, are then let down; and the solid buckets being rapidly whirled round, produce a strong current, which brings with it the stones of the amber bed, casting them into the successive perforated buckets, from whence again they are shaken out on the gratings aforesaid. The amber is then separated from its earthy accompaniments, made up in sacks, and taken to the sorting house at Memel to be carefully sifted. The operations are carried on each year till the frost sets in—that is, for about thirty weeks—and they require no ordinary robustness of constitution in the labourers, who work in relays for eight hours at a time, day and night. The average weight of amber brought up by this process during the working season is 57,000 lbs., but the value can hardly be computed, as it varies according to the quality of the material. The inferior amber, used for fumigation and polish, may fetch about four silver gröschen (fivepence) per lb. The better kind, available for the mouthpieces of pipes, &c., will fetch twenty-five thalers (from £3 to £4) the lb., while the beautiful straw-coloured amber is of absolutely priceless estimation.

Still more curious and interesting than their dredging machinery in the Memel roadstead, is the diving apparatus by which, since 1867, these “amber kings of Königsberg,” Messrs. Stantien and Becker, have succeeded in reaching other hiding-places of the shining treasure. Their diving flotilla, apparently riding at anchor below the lighthouse



of the Brusterort, strikes the observer's eye at a distance. On approaching nearer he will see signs of new and most daring enterprise. For at the foot of the Brusterort there is a long low reef, some 600 yards long by 400 wide, containing the most valuable kind of amber. It has been accumulating for centuries under mighty blocks of stone, and has till lately defied all efforts of man to force it from its resting-place. Even the hardy constitution of the Samlander could not withstand the severities of that exposed peninsula when he had to work by the ordinary resources of diving and forking; nor were his implements available for any large gain of a material so deeply encrusted. But Stantien and Becker having obtained their rights from the existing farmers of the royal dues in this locality, were not long in applying the most recent inventions of mechanical science to the task.

The Paris International Exhibition of 1867 contained a new diving apparatus, invented by a French naval officer, Captain Rouquayrol Denayrouze. Messrs. Stantien and Becker lost no time in inviting to Brusterort a few young French mechanics who should instruct the native work people both in the use and manufacture of this apparatus. The labour required is of the severest kind. The "strong-boned, iracund" peasants, described by Carlyle, the descendants of the ancient Cures and Szamates, men often of reckless and adventurous antecedents—smugglers, perchance, on the border-land of Russian Poland, who have pursued their calling with the Cossack bullets whizzing round their heads,—these are fit material for the recruits whom the diving-adventure of the amber-reef, at Brusterort, enlists in its service. The costume of the diver is as follows:—A woollen garment covers the entire body. This is again encompassed by an india-rubber dress, made in one piece, but differing in shape from the old-fashioned diving dress, and allowing the diver to lie at full length. The helmet, also, is of a novel construction. Firmly fastened to it, and resting on the shoulders, is a small air-chest, made of sheet iron. This chest is connected with the air-pump, in the boat above, by an india-rubber tubing, forty feet long, and with the diver's lungs by another india-rubber tube, the mouth-piece of which is held by the diver between his teeth; the whole apparatus being scientifically arranged, so as to admit a sufficient supply of pure air from above, and means of exit for the expired breath. The helmet is provided with three openings, covered with glass, and protected by wire, for the use of the eyes and mouth. When this contrivance has been screwed on to the person of the diver, a rope tied round his waist, and half a hundred weight of lead attached to the feet, shoulders, and helmet, he is ready for his plunge. Down, fathoms deep, he descends into the amber world. He stays there, may be for five hours at a time, hooking, dragging, tearing the amber from its bed with his heavy two-pronged fork. Often it resists

his utmost efforts. However cold the weather may be, these men of iron strength will come up from their submarine labours streaming with perspiration. The overseer stands in the boat to receive the amber from their pockets. In case he should wish to ascend before the usual time, the diver has to close his mouth and breathe five or six times through his nostrils, by this means filling the apparatus with air, which will bring him to the surface without other assistance. The diving-boats are manned by eight men each—two divers, two pairs of men who work the air-pumps alternately, with their eyes fixed on a dial-plate, by which the supply of air is nicely regulated, one man to hold the safety-rope attached round the diver's body, and haul him up at the slightest sign from below, and the overseer. Accidents are said to be very rare ; but, as an instance of the daring character of the men employed, it is related that a plot was detected not long ago among some of them for a nocturnal descent to a spot they had carefully marked, in order there to collect a rich treasure on their own account unknown to their employers.

Amber, as we have said, is an amphibious product. Much of it is embedded in the "blue earth" stratum of the peninsula itself. The largest mass ever found—in the days of Maltebrun, at least ; for we know not what size the specimens in Messrs. Stantien and Becker's warehouses may since have measured—was found at a place near the frontier of Lithuania, and weighed 18 lbs.

To get at the inland amber of Samland, vigorous efforts are now being made, partly by those peasant-farmers who still retain the royal dues in their hands, and partly by the amber firms of Königsberg, that of Stantien and Becker at the head. Hitherto the method chiefly employed is that of manual spade work. Near the village of Sassan, for instance, a shaft is dug by the daily labour of thirty or forty men, while the water which presses in from the sea is laboriously kept out by water engines ; and however clumsy this method may be, a sufficient supply of the desired produce is found to make it thoroughly remunerative. There is no doubt that the great capitalists now engaged in the amber trade, will bring to bear on their inland processes of extraction those improved and improving inventions of the mining art, which are likely to be not less effective than the submarine methods employed on the Brusterort reef. Already, Stantien and Becker have agents and dépôts at all the chief cities in Europe, and in India, China, and Mexico.

M. MERIVALE.

## THE GHOSTLY MAID.

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SIR GERALD couched his lance in rest,  
And rode, to do the king's behest,  
Down a green glade with flowers besprent,  
And ever as he onward went,  
He heard a sighing voice which said,  
"Ah me ! oh most unhappy maid !"

Sir Gerald look'd to right and left,  
He poised his lance, with action deft,  
To pierce the traitor who should dare  
Drive such sweet captive to despair,  
And make her wail, with many a sigh,  
" A most unhappy maid am I ! "

But though with cautious step he stole  
Round yon green oak's gigantic bole,  
To seize the villain unaware,—  
No captive and no knight were there !  
He only heard among the leaves  
Faint sobbing, as of one who grieves.

He thrust his shining lance between  
The matted creeper's verdant screen ;  
He turned aside the ivy veil  
Which swathed the hollow tree ; the pale  
And trembling willows seemed to hide  
Some secret in the sluggish tide.

But look where'er he may, in vain  
Are all his toil and all his pain ;  
Only a voice among the leaves,  
And sobbing as of one who grieves,  
Answer his call. " Alas ! ah me ! "  
The plaint responds incessantly.

Since then, Sir Gerald, bravest knight  
Of any in the noon-day fight,  
Seems all distraught, his blunted lance  
Seeks hungrily the fading chance  
Of pricking in that tangled glade  
The knight who grieves a captured maid.

Oh wasted lance ! oh man undone !  
Come out beneath the wholesome sun,  
And leave the fatal lure. They say  
No knight but came to rue the day  
On which he followed, unafraid,  
The wailing of that ghostly maid !

B. R. P. BELLOC.

## THE LITERARY LIFE.

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### III.

IN ways which need not be particularized I have found out that some portions of what was said in the two previous papers under the above heading have been misunderstood or misapplied.

I said, for example, that there was always an opening or a market for writing of the kind which, to use the phraseology of an old proverb, told the one half of the world how the other half lived. Your "*Times* Commissioner" or your "Amateur Casual" is sure to be a success. A true and graphic account of the experiences of a cook at a great club, or a soldier in barracks, or a parish clerk or registrar, would almost necessarily be interesting to the magazine or newspaper public. A large portion of the most readable columns in periodicals like *All the Year Round* consists of writing of the kind in question. It differs greatly in quality, and some of the descriptive papers that are greedily read are the worst trash that human pen ever produced. But, to get accepted by a magazine or newspaper, an article of the sort we have now in view must either be a simple, naïve, truly autobiographical record; or it must be wrought with literary art of *some* kind. Dull people when they read writing that seems to them a very faithful account of what they have themselves observed, or might have observed, or believe they might have observed, are very apt to exclaim, "Oh, anybody could do that; the author has just copied it, and that's all." This is a woeful mistake. Any beginner who will sit down and attempt to sketch the look-out from his own window will speedily discover that *copying* would take him to all eternity, and, supposing his copy done, that it would convey no clear or strong impression. What is needed is selective faculty—the power, gained partly from nature and partly from culture, of seizing on proper centres, and grouping other details around those centres. In fact, it is with description of this kind as it is with poetry. Poetry is usually written in the after-glow of reproductive feeling, and whatever minute memoranda you may make for a descriptive article, mere transcribing will not suffice; there must be digestion and assimilation. I was once told that the editor of a periodical said to a new contributor something like this: "We want these descriptive articles, but you must not do it in a bald way, you know. Supposing you went to that shot manufactory over there and saw the process, you mustn't go and write it down as you saw it. Go and get drunk after it, and write your article next day." If any very serious

reviewer should assert that I am recommending habitual intoxication to literary men, I cannot stop him; but probably most people will catch the meaning. So much to remove an impression which some readers have run away with, that the kind of writing for which there is a ready opening is easy.

But there is another mistake to be corrected. In saying that writing of the sort indicated in a previous paper was likely to get printed, I had no intention of suggesting that anybody might make a sudden dash at literature, and get a living by producing and selling descriptive articles to magazines and newspapers. It is the gaps of no-work and no-pay that make the commencement of a scribbling career so trying, and some of my readers have evidently not thought of these. The best possible workman at this sort of literature could not rush up from Glasgow to London and commence his career by selling an article or two a week. There are not magazines enough to keep one man going on that footing; for of course every periodical is not always wanting the same class of article.

Again, on the subject of the use of introductions I find there has been some misunderstanding. Of course all the introductions in the world will only give a man a better *chance*. How often does the eager "aspirant" suppose a newspaper is really in want of a contributor to write an article every day, or every now and then, or every week? Or how often is a magazine editor in a position to say to a new-comer, "Dear me, you are the very man I was looking for; the sort of article you propose is just what I want at the moment, and you must do me one in every number for a twelvemonth?" Or how often is a fresh editor required for a paper or a magazine? and when one is wanted, how many applicants do you suppose there are for the post? No, my friend. Beginning a literary career is, in the enormous majority of cases, a most hazardous affair. The waste places of life are strewn with the bones of rash adventurers who have fallen by the way.

Of course the hazard is very much diminished if you do not care about paying your landlord, landlady, or tradespeople. Anybody can live who is not ashamed to live on other people. But I never intended to address pickpockets and swindlers, or even those on whom debt sits easily.

This reminds me of another matter which I feel bound to refer to—because I see plainly that my first papers have produced effects the very reverse of what they were intended to produce. So let these facts be clearly understood:—First, a great deal of the literary work that is printed is offered gratuitously by the producers of it. Secondly, a considerable quantity of the work which is matter of ordinary bargain is never paid for, owing to some ill-luck befalling the proprietor of the periodical. Thirdly, payment is sometimes

postponed, for a length of time which a beginner would find sufficiently distressing.

There is yet another point which deserves the attention of "aspirants." They are apt to forget that periodical literature is subject to certain necessary conditions as to days and hours. The work must be done to time. Even to a born hack, to the most easily harnessed of literary labourers, this is often trying; in proportion as you rise in the scale of labour, it is one of the very hardest circumstances of a literary life. Even when the subject is congenial and everything external conspires to make the task of writing pleasant, it may still be irritating and exhausting labour to produce. True, "heavenly muse" often proves kind when she is once fairly solicited; but by no means always. Nor is this all. It stands to reason that one engagement may clash with another; and that you may often have to kill the goose for the sake of the golden eggs. You want to pursue a certain propitious train of study or meditation, or to let your brain lie fallow for a time for good reasons,—but find it impossible. And so on—and so on—in a hundred forms of "worrit."

In speaking of "cliqueism," I was writing in some ignorance of the subject, and there are literary men who would take a somewhat different view of that subject. So I gather from comments which have reached me. But my own path has not been that of the ordinary *littérateur*. I expressly said that I had, for conscience-sake, never trusted to literature for bread; and this, with other causes, has necessarily shut me out of some paths of social information in these matters. Still, I am perfectly certain I was right in stating that, as "a lion in the path," cliqueism may be treated as if it were non-existent: though, of course, it exists and in plenty. Nor do I see why it should not. Congenial sets must guard themselves against uncongenial intruders. But cliqueists who give themselves airs, or *nourish* an exclusive spirit, should remember Shelley's little poem about the aziola in the dark. "Do you not hear the Aziola?" said his wife one evening. He thought it was "some tedious woman," and wanted to run away and hide. And his wife saw what he thought, and laughed, and said,

"Disquiet yourself not!

'Tis nothing but a little downy owl."

I mean, the newcomer is by no means sure to be a person in whose face it is necessary to slam the door. I have certainly heard of insolences of cliqueism—but these are not usually commercial obstacles; and my impression is strong that there are more cliques among painters than among writing men.

Some explanation is, I find, necessary with regard to what I said about danger to the conscience in adopting literature as a working profession. I meant little more than the person quoted by Mr. Helps,

who affirmed that no man could afford to keep convictions unless he had about a thousand a year. In the first days of the *Argosy* Mr. Anthony Trollope wrote a most truthful, though rather hard-mouthed, sketch of the experiences of a rash literary "aspirant." This young gentleman was engaged to write the London letter of a country newspaper. After some time he was cashiered, the editor sending him a specimen from another newspaper of the sort of thing he really wanted. The young "aspirant," who was married, flung it to his wife with words of disgust, to the effect that it was what no gentleman, no man of culture and self-respect could ever write. Now I know three parallels to this story. In two of the instances the parallel was exact. The writers cashiered were both men of general knowledge, good opportunities (for their purpose), much vivacity of style, and with practised pens; but they would have scorned to insert an *on dit* about Lady Mordaunt, or Lord Palmerston, or any questionable backstairs stuff about public men. "Is that all?" asked the lawyer of a Scottish client who had just stated his case to him. "Ou ay, man," said the client, "that's a' the *truth*, ye ken. I thocht ye wud jist put the lees till't yersel'." Now this reticent spirit would not do in the sort of case Mr. Trollope drew. Apart from that, in the three instances that came under my own notice, the editors wanted—i.e., their readers wanted—positive bad writing, a style always on the stretch, and full of base mannerisms. There has been a great improvement in these matters within the last ten years, and I hope there is now hardly a corner of the kingdom in which it is *de rigueur* to call Dr. Johnson "Burly Dr. Johnson," or Goldsmith "Dear, simple Oliver," or John Knox "Brave John Knox," or to say of a sarcastic speech of Mr. Disraeli's, that "while listening you thought of the Indian of the desert shaking his tomahawk over his prostrate foe." Some people would not feel their consciences hurt by stooping to this manner, and the semi-scandalous tricks that are expected to accompany it. But this is not all. You can hardly write with acceptance upon a newspaper without in some degree taking on its colour. This is the case under all but the most favourable conditions, and with certain peculiar exceptions. Suppose a very poor man, of liberal principles, is invited to write London letters for a Conservative paper; it is a sore temptation, and he will say to himself, that he is not to write leaders, but to send news, and that he can keep his own political faith unsmirched. Nay, he will perhaps hardly find out his mistake, if at all, until something of the fine sensibility of his political conscience has been worn away in his attempts to accommodate himself to his position.

I write these things with a heavy heart, and putting much restraint upon myself; for, as the Queen of the Ansareh said to Tancred, there are things which should be spoken and things which should not be spoken. And what fine comments I can overhear about "working



for a common cause," "suppression of your own idiosyncrasies," and the like. The answer (provisional) is, that no one was ever deceived by this loose talk till he had lost the bloom of his soul. Then I overhear something else: "Why, if all these fine scruples of conscience were entertained, such and such things would never be accomplished in the world." Answer (final): And a good job, too.

It is, of course, a necessity of the existence of a journal that it should pay. Hence arises perpetual accommodation to the movements of what is pleasantly called public opinion. Take teetotalism, and legal compulsion applied to the whole of the liquor question, and again the question of the political *status* of women. In respect to both of these subjects, the pressure from without is becoming so strong, that you can easily trace its influence from without *upon* newspaper writing; for I assert that it is not an influence exerted from *within*. Of course a journal is not a person, and an editor can say, "Jones, I know you hate the Permissive Prohibitory Bill, and I will get Wilson to write such-and-such articles;"—no doubt, but current questions like these arise indirectly in political discussion, and not to touch them at all is often not to *write* at all. Besides, in time Jones is almost certain to begin rounding off the corners of his dislike of the hated Bill, and before long, under pressure of regretted lost guineas, he will begin to turn round; until at last, without any particular consciousness of having "ratted," you will find him on the other side of the question.

These are only very loose hints as to the danger to conscience which the greater number of journalists must face. To some, and some able men too, they do not exist; for a writer may be able, and yet his mind may quite *naturally* take its colour from what it works at, like the dyer's hand. Many, no doubt, pass safely through the fire. But there is another danger, which does not so much apply to the case of the journalist proper as to literary men who have to deal more with matters of individual life and sentiment. I mean the danger which arises from *forcing moods*. This has necessarily to be done when "time" is called; and even where the task is in essence congenial, there is harm in it, or, at least, risk of harm. It has, of course, a great deal to do with those forms in which some literary men betray a dependence on casual excitement. But this is a subject upon which there has been so much exaggeration, that it may be as well to add that, taking equal numbers of my friends and acquaintances at random, I find a great many more people who are fond of a glass *out* of the scribbling circle than within it.

It can scarcely be necessary to add, that some important parts of the subject still remain untouched in these papers.

MATTHEW BROWNE.

# HANNAH.

J. Robt.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

## CHAPTER XI.

THE climaxes of life come only occasionally. When borne upon the height of them we think we can endure anything; all beside them seem so small. But when they are over, and we have sunk back into the level of every-day life, it is different. The sword-stroke we hardly felt; the daily pin-pricks drive us wild. It is sure to be so; we cannot help it.

At first Hannah thought she could. After that Sunday morning she and Bernard talked no more together—why should they? Their minds were quite made up that both love and marriage were lawful to them—if attainable. But seeing that an immediate union was impossible, and a separation almost equally so, they spoke of neither again, but tacitly determined to go on living together as before—in no way like lovers—but as like brother and sister as was practicable; both for their own sakes, and for the sake of outward eyes.

This decided, Hannah thought her way would be clear. It was only a question of time, and patient waiting. Any year the Bill might be passed, and their marriage made possible. In the meantime it was no worse than a long engagement; better, perhaps, since they had the daily comfort of one another's society. At least Hannah felt it so, and was cheerful and content. What Bernard felt he did not say—but he was not always content; often very dull, irritable, and desponding. At such times Hannah had great patience with him—the patience which had now the additional strength of knowing that it was to be exercised for life.

It was most needed, she found, after he had been to the Moat-House—whither, according to her wish, he steadily went, and went alone. Had she been his wife—or even openly his betrothed—she might, spite of all she had said, have resented this; but, now, what could she resent? She had no rights to urge. So she submitted. As to what passed on these visits, she asked no questions and he gave no information. She never saw Bernard's people now; except on Sundays, with the distance of a dozen pews between them. Young Mrs. Melville still called—punctiliously and pointedly—leaving her pair of greys standing outside the gate; but she excused herself from asking Hannah to the Grange, because if the girls were there it would be so very awkward.

"And the girls are always there," added she querulously. "I

can't call my house my own—or my husband's either. Hannah, when you marry, you'll be thankful that you've got no sisters."

Hannah smiled. She saw that of the real truth of her position with regard to Mr. Rivers Adeline guessed nothing. It was best so.

As weeks passed another change gradually came. Invitations—the fear of which had sometimes perplexed her; for how should she meet the Moat-House family, even upon neutral ground?—almost totally ceased. Her neighbours left off calling—that is, her grand neighbours; the humbler ones still sought her; but she fancied she read in their eyes a painful curiosity—a still more painful compassion, especially when they met her and Bernard together—a chance which occurred but seldom now. For he, too, seemed to have a nervous dread of being seen with her, and avoided her so much that she would often have thought he had forgotten every word that had passed between them, save for the constant mindfulness, the continual watchful care, which a man never shows except to the one woman he loves best in the world.

Yet sometimes, even having so much, made the weak heart crave for a little—a very little more; just a word or two of love; an evening now and then of their old frank intercourse—so safe and free: but neither ever came. Bernard seemed to make it a point of honour that whatever people chose to say, they should be given no data upon which to come to the smallest conclusion. Within, as without the house, all the world might have heard every word he said to Miss Thelluson.

Whatever suspicion was whispered about the village, it rose to no open scandal. Everybody came to church as usual, and no one applied to Mr. Rivers's bishop to restrain him from preaching because he retained as his housekeeper a lady whom the law persisted in regarding as his sister. But the contradiction was, that in spite of her being counted his "sister," people did talk, and would talk; and, of course, the sharpest lash of their tongues fell, not upon the man, but upon the woman.

Slowly, slowly, Hannah became aware that every servant in the house, every family in the parish, kept an eye upon her, observing, condemning, sympathising, defending—all by turns—but never leaving her alone, till she felt like the poor camel in the desert, whose dying gaze sees in the horizon that faint black line, coming nearer and nearer—the vultures which are to pick her bones. She would have gone frantic sometimes—brave woman as she was—in the utter impossibility of fighting against the intangible wrong, had it not been for the child.

Rosie became not only her darling, but her friend. She had now almost no other companion, and wanted none. All grown-up people seemed worldly and shallow, dull and cold, compared to the pure little soul, fresh out of heaven—which heaven itself had sent to com-

fort her. As Rosie's English increased they two held long conversations together—very monosyllabic certainly, and upon the simplest of topics—"bow-wows," "gee-gees," and so on—yet quite comprehensible, and equally interesting to both. For is not a growing soul the most interesting and lovely, as well as most solemn sight, in all this world? Hannah sometimes stood in awe and wonder at the intelligence of the little woman, not yet three years old.

They two understood one another perfectly, and loved one another as even real mother and child do not always love. For never in all her little life had Rosie heard a harsher word than, "Oh, Rosie—Tannie so sorry!" which sufficed to melt her at once into the most contrite tears. Pure contrition—with no fear of punishment—for she had never been punished. To her innocent, happy heart, no harmless joy had ever been denied, no promise ever broken. She knew that, and rested in her little ark of love as content and safe as a nautilus in its shell, swimming over the troubled waters of poor Tannie's lot like a visible angel of consolation.

Day by day that lot was growing more hard to bear, until at last chance brought it to a climax.

One forenoon, just before Mr. Rivers was going out, there drove up to the House on the Hill a pretty pony carriage and pair of greys, and out of it stepped a little, bright, active, pretty woman—the Countess of Dunsmore.

"I knew I should surprise you," cried she, kissing Hannah on both cheeks, and telling her how well she was looking; which she was, in the sudden pleasure of the meeting. "But I wanted to surprise you. We are visiting at Highwood Park, Mr. Rivers, and I met your sisters there at dinner, you know, and promised to come and see them; but of course I came to see Miss Thelluson first. Well, my dear, and how are you? And how is your pet Rosie?"

The little Rosie answered for herself, being so greatly attracted by Lady Dunsmore's ermine tails, and, perhaps, by her sweet motherly face, that she made friends with her immediately. But Hannah was nervous—agitated. She knew exactly the expression of that quick dark eye, which saw everything, and saw through everything, whether or not the lady mentioned the result of that observation.

Bernard, too, was a little constrained. He knew Lady Dunsmore slightly, and evidently was not aware that Hannah knew her so well; for Hannah was not apt to boast of her friends, especially when they happened to have titles. Yet the sight of her warmed her heart, and she had hundreds of questions to ask about her old pupils, and endless reminiscences of her old life with them—so peaceful and contented. Yet would she have had it back, rather than the life now? No!—unhesitatingly no!

She felt this, when, having put the blithe little countess in her

carriage, Bernard returned. He walked heavily down the garden, in deep thought.

|"A charming person, Lady Dunsmore; and a warm, steady friend of yours, Hannah."

"Yes, she was always kind to me."

"Kinder than others have been since," said Mr. Rivers, sighing. "Would you like to go and pay her the long visit she asks for?"

"No."

"And what shall you do about that invitation she brought you, to go with my sisters to dine at Highwood Lodge?"

"What can I do, except not go? To explain is impossible."

"Yes."—After a moment's thought Mr. Rivers went on—"Hannah, may I say a word? Evidently my people have been quite silent to Lady Dunsmore about you; she expected to meet you at the Moat-House. They perhaps are sorry, and would be glad of an opportunity to atone. May I speak to them?"

"Stop a minute. What shall you say? For I will have nothing said that would humiliate me."

Bernard looked tenderly at the flushed face. "My love, any man humiliates himself who for a moment allows the woman he has chosen to be lightly esteemed. Be satisfied; I shall keep up your dignity as if it were my own; for it is my own."

"Thank you." But there was only pride—no sweetness in the words. They made him turn back at once.

"Oh, Hannah, how long is this state of things to last? How can we bear it if it lasts very long?"

She replied nothing.

"Sometimes I ask myself, why should we bear it? when our consciences are satisfied, when the merest legal form stands between us and our happiness. You do not feel the suspense as I do; I see that; but do you know it sometimes almost drives me mad that I cannot marry you?"

His agitation was so extreme that Hannah was frightened, both for his sake and lest any servant should come in and find them thus. Oh, the misery of that false life they led! oh the humiliation of concealment!

"Why should all the world be happy but me? Why should that foolish old Morecomb—but I forget, I never told you he is going to be married. I tell you nothing; I never have a chance of an hour's quiet talk with you."

"Why not? It would make me much happier."

Those pure, sad, beseeching eyes—he turned away from them; he could not bear them.

"Don't ask me. I dare not. If I saw much of you I would not answer for myself. I might"—he laughed—"I might even horrify you by asking you to go abroad and get married, as old Mr. Melville

did. But I will not; no, I will not. And if I would, you would not consent?

"No."

"I was sure of it. One might as well attempt to move the monument as Hannah Thelluson after she had once said No."

His manner was so rough, so reckless, that it pained her almost more than anything she had yet experienced. Was their forced, unnatural kind of life injuring him? And if so, ought it to continue? And if it must be ended, was not she the one to do it?

"Bernard," she said, "will you come home to-night?"—for it was now not the rule but the rare exception, his staying with her of evenings—"then we will have one of our old talks together, and perhaps we may settle something; or feel, when we look them calmly in the face, that things are not as dreadful as they seem. Now go. Hark! there is Rosie calling over the staircase for papa."

He had a real fatherly heart now; this young man, from whom, in his full flush of youth, life's best blessing, a wife's love, was first taken, and then tantalisingly denied. He snatched at the joys still left to him, and clasping his little girl in his arms, pressed his hot forehead upon Rosie's breast.

But all that day his words and tones rang warningly through Hannah's heart. This could not last—it was against human nature. So much, yet so little as they were to one another. They *must* be more—or less. Should she leave him; for a time perhaps? or should she go quite away? She knew not what to do. Nor what to say, when he should come home to her to-night, and appeal to her with the innocent half-childlike expression his face sometimes wore, for comfort, counsel. How could she give either? She needed both herself.

And when their formal dinner was over, and they sat together in their pleasant drawing-room, with the yellow twilight glimmering outside—for summer was coming back again, the third summer since Rosa died,—life seemed to Hannah so hard, so hard!

She gave him his tea almost in silence, and then he proposed a stroll in the garden, up and down the front walk, which was in full view of the house. Into the sheltered green alley—the "lovers' walk"—these two poor lovers never went; never dared to go.

But such happiness as they could get they took, and Hannah had risen to fetch her shawl, when they saw entering the gate the last apparition they expected to see—Lady Rivers. For months she had not crossed their threshold. But then—Hannah would have been more than mortal not to have remembered this—it had been crossed that morning by the Countess of Dunsmore.

Lady Rivers was by no means a stupid woman. Her faculty for discovering which way the wind blew, and trimming her sails accordingly, amounted to absolute genius. Not being thin-skinned

herself she never looked for that weakness in others ; so had under all circumstances the most enviable coolness and self-possession. The graceful air with which she entered by the French window, kissed Bernard in motherly greeting, and shook hands with Miss Thelluson as if she had seen her only the day before, was most inimitable.

"How comfortable you look here ! it is quite a pleasure to see you. May I ask for a cup of tea ? your tea always used to be so good, Miss Thelluson. And you had a visit from Lady Dunsmore ? So had we afterwards. What a charming person she is ; and a great friend of yours, I understand."

Hannah assented.

"I must congratulate you ; for a lady, especially a single lady, is always judged by her choice of friends."

"I did not choose Lady Dunsmore for my friend ; I was her governess."

"Indeed ! Anyhow, she has evidently a great regard for you. By-the-bye, does she know anything of the—the little uncomfortableness between us lately, which, as I came to say to-night, is, I trust, entirely a thing of the past. Don't speak, Bernard. In fact this visit is not meant for you. I came over to tell Miss Thelluson of something which—as Mr. Morecomb was the cause of difference between her and me " (Hannah opened her eyes)—"will, I trust, heal it. He is engaged to be married to my eldest daughter."

Hannah offered the customary good wishes.

"It is indeed a most suitable marriage, and we are quite pleased at it. So now, my dear, let by-gones be by-gones. Will you come with Bernard to meet Lady Dunsmore at dinner on Friday ?"

Never was there a more composed putting of the saddle upon the wrong horse, ignoring everything that it was advisable to ignore, for the sake of convenience. And many a woman, prudent and worldly-wise, would have accepted it as such. But, unfortunately, Hannah was not a prudent woman. Against certain meannesses her spirit revolted with a fierceness that slipped all self-control.

She glanced towards Bernard, but his eyes were turned away ; he had the moody, uncomfortable look of a man dragged unwillingly into women's wars. Thrown back upon herself, alone, quite alone, pride whispered that she must act as if she were alone, as if his love were all a dream, and she once more the solitary, independent Hannah Thelluson, who, forlorn as she was, had always been able till now to hold her own, had never yet experienced an insult or submitted tamely to an injury. She would not now.

"I thank you, Lady Rivers, for the trouble you have taken, but it will be quite impossible for me to accept your invitation."

Lady Rivers looked amazed. That any concession she made should not be joyfully received, that any invitation to the Moat-House should not be accepted with avidity ; the thing was ridiculous. She paused

a moment as if doubting she had heard aright, and then appealed to Bernard.

“Pray assure Miss Thelluson that she need not hesitate. I have watched her narrowly of late, and have quite got over any little prejudices I might have had. I and the girls will be delighted to see her. Do persuade her to come with you.”

“Excuse me, but I always leave Miss Thelluson to decide for herself.”

The cold voice, the indifferent manner, though she knew both were advisable and inevitable, smote Hannah to the core. That bitter position of love and no love, ties and no ties, seemed to degrade her almost as if she had been really the vile thing that some people thought her.

“Mr. Rivers is right,” she said. “I must decide for myself. You wished my visits to you to cease; I acquiesced; it will not be quite so easy to resume them. As Mr. Rivers’s sister-in-law and house-keeper I shall always be happy to see you in his house, but I fear you must excuse my coming to yours. Let us dismiss the subject. Shall I offer you a cup of tea?”

Her manner, gentle as it was, implied a resolution strong enough to surprise even Bernard. For Lady Rivers, she coloured, even beneath her delicate rouge—but she was too prudent to take offence.

“Thank you. Your tea, as I said, is always excellent; and perhaps when we have more attractions to offer you, we may yet see you at the Moat-House. In the meantime, I hope, Bernard, that Miss Thelluson’s absence will not necessitate yours.”

And she looked hard at him, determined to find out how he felt in the matter, and to penetrate, if possible, the exact relations between the two.

It was a critical moment. Most men, even the best of them, are, morally, very great cowards, and Bernard was no exception to the rule. Besides, Hannah was not his wife, or his betrothed—she had not even called herself his friend: she had given him no rights over her—asked no protection from him. What could he do or say? Irresolute, he looked from one to the other—excessively uncomfortable—when Hannah came to the rescue.

“Of course my brother-in-law will go without me: we are quite independent in our proceedings. And he will explain to Lady Dunsmore—the utmost it is necessary to explain, as I never talk of my private affairs to anybody—that I do not pay many visits; I had rather stay at home with my little girl. That will be perfectly true,” she added, her lips slightly quivering. “I prefer Rosie’s company to anybody’s. She loves me.”

Bernard started up, and then, fearful of having committed himself, sat down again. Lady Rivers, though evidently vexed, was equal to the situation, and met it with a dignified indifference.



"Pray, please yourself, Miss Thelluson; no doubt you act upon your own good reasons. You are, I always understood, a lady who never changes her mind; but if you should do so, we shall be glad to see you." And then she passed over the matter, as too trivial to bear further discussion, and conversed in the most amiable manner for another half-hour. Finally, with a benign "Good evening, Miss Thelluson; I am sure Lady Dunsmore will be much disappointed at not seeing you," she terminated the visit, as if it had been any ordinary call.

Hannah was not surprised: it was the fashion of the Rivers family not to see anything they did not wish to see: the only thing that vexed her was about Bernard. He had said nothing—absolutely nothing—except telling her, when he took his hat to accompany his step-mother home, that he would be back immediately. Was he displeased with her? Did he think she had acted ill? Had she done so? Was it her duty to submit to everything for his sake? Surely not. He had no right to expect it. Was it because she loved him that she felt so bitterly angry with him?

Yet, when, sooner than she had expected, he returned, and threw himself into his chair, pale and dejected, like a man tied and bound by fate, who sees no way to free himself—the anger melted, the pity revived. He too suffered—they suffered alike—why should they reproach one another?

"So, you have had your way, Hannah." Yes, there was reproach in the tone. "Are you quite sure you were right in what you have done?"

"Quite sure;—at least, that unless I were some other than myself, I could not have done differently."

And then they sat, silent, in stiff coldness, until the last ray of amber twilight had faded out of the room. What a pretty room it was—just the place to be happy in—for friends, or lovers, or husband and wife, to sit and dream together in the quiet gloaming, which all happy people love—which is so dreadful to the restless or the miserable.

"We should have rung for lights," cried Bernard, pulling violently at the bell. "You know I hate the dark."

And when lights came, they saw one another's faces—his burning crimson, hers pale and in tears.

"Oh, Hannah, Hannah, how miserable we are! As I said, if this goes on much longer, how shall we bear it?"

"I do not know." Then, steeling herself against both anger and pain, "Bernard," she said, "what did you wish me to do? Your family have no claim upon me nor I upon them. We are, as things stand, mere strangers. Are they to throw me off and pick me up again, when and how they choose? Am I to submit to it?"

"I did not ask you."

"No, but you looked it. You would have liked me to go to the Moat-House."

"Yes. I wish you to be friends with them. I want them to love you."

"They do not love me—they only receive me on sufferance, and I will go nowhere on sufferance. I can live alone. I want no society; but where I do go I want to be loved, I want to be respected. Oh, Bernard!" and she looked piteously in his face, "sometimes I am tempted to say with you,—if this lasts long, how shall I ever bear it?"

"How shall I bear it? It is harder for me than you."

"Perhaps. But you forget it was your doing, not mine."

And then both drew back, appalled at the sharpness of their words—at the bitterness of these mutual recriminations.

Bernard held out his hand. "Forgive me. You are right. It was I who brought all this trouble upon you, and now I have not strength to meet it—either for you or for myself. I am so miserable that it makes me wicked. Something must be done. What shall it be?"

"What indeed?"

"Hannah, decide. Don't look at me in that dead silence. Speak out, for I can bear it no longer. Shall we part? Or—will you marry me at once?"

He could hardly have known what he was saying, or else, in his despair, anything seemed possible to him. Not to her. She was very gentle. She did not even draw away her hands which he had grasped: she scarcely seemed to recognise the insult he was unwittingly offering her. She only answered, sorrowfully, yet without the slightest indecision, "We will part."

Three little words—but they brought Bernard to his senses immediately. He fell on his knees before her, and passionately begged her forgiveness.

"But you do not know what I suffer. Inwardly, outwardly—life is one long torment. At the Moat-House I have no peace. They talk at me—and at you; they try every means of worming out my secret from me. But they shall not. I will hide it at all costs. People may guess what they like—but we are safe so long as they know nothing. God help me! I talk as if we were committing a deadly sin, when my love of you is the best thing—the only good thing in me." He looked up at Hannah, and ground his teeth. "It is an accursed law," he said. "A law made only for fools, or sinners; and yet it may suffice to blast both our lives."

"No," Hannah answered, "nothing could do that—except ourselves."

"A commonplace truth!" and Bernard laughed bitterly.

"It is God's truth though; His right and wrong are much simpler than man's."

"What is right and what is wrong? for I am growing so mad I

hardly know. Show me—preach to me—I used to tell you you could preach better than the clergyman. Only love me, Hannah—if there is any love in that pale, pure face of yours. Sometimes I think there is none.”

“None—oh, Bernard, none?”

For a minute she stooped over him; for a minute he felt that she had not a stone for a heart. And then the strong, firm, righteous will of the woman who, however deeply loving, could die, but would not do wrong, forced itself upon him, lulling passion itself into a temporary calm. He leant his head against her; he sobbed upon her arm like a child; and she soothed him almost as if he had been a child.

“Listen to me,” she said. “We must endure—there is no help for it. It is a cruel, unjust law, but it is the law, and while it exists we cannot break it. I could not twist my conscience in any possible way so as to persuade myself to break it. No form of marriage could ever make me legally your wife.”

“Not in England. Out of England it could.”

“But then—as soon as we came back to England, what should I be? And if, in the years to come—Oh Bernard, it is impossible, impossible!”

She said no more than that—how could she? But she felt it so intensely that, had it been necessary, she would have smothered down all natural shame, and said out to him—as solemnly as if it had been a vow before God—her determination never, for any personal happiness of her own, to entail upon innocent children the curse of a tainted name.

“I understand,” Bernard replied humbly. “Forgive me; I ought never to have said a word about our marrying. It must not be. I must go on my way alone to the end.”

“Not quite alone—oh, not quite alone.”

But, as if more afraid of her tenderness than of her coldness, Bernard rose, and began walking about the room.

“You must decide—as I said; for my own judgment altogether fails me. We cannot go on living as we do: some change must be thought of; but I cannot tell what it should be.”

“Why need it be?” said Hannah timidly. “Can we not continue as we are?”

“No!” A fierce, abrupt, undeniable No.

“Then—I had better go away.” He looked so terrified that she hastily added, “Only for a time, of course—till the bitterness between you and your people softens—till we can see our way a little. It must be made plain to us some day; I believe it always is to those who have innocent hearts.”

And as she sat, her hands folded on her lap, pale and sad as she looked, there was such a sweet composure in her aspect, that Bernard stopped and gazed—gazed till the peace was reflected on his own.

"You are a saint, and I am—only a man. A very wretched man sometimes. Think for me—tell me what I ought to do."

Hannah paused a little, and then suggested that he should, for a few weeks or so, part with Rosie and herself, and let them go, as Lady Dunsmore had earnestly wished, to pay her a visit in London.

"Did she say so?" said Bernard, with sensitive fear. "Do you think she said it with any meaning—that she has any idea concerning us?"

"You need not be afraid even if she had," was the rather proud answer. Alas! how quick they were growing to take offence, even at one another. Yes, it was best to part. "I mean," Hannah added, "that, even if she guessed anything, it would not signify. I shall confess nothing; and I have often heard her say that a secret accidentally discovered ought to be held just as if it had never been discovered at all. Be satisfied—neither Lady Dunsmore nor I shall betray you, even to one another."

And for a moment Hannah thought with comfort that this good woman was her friend—had grown more and more such, as absence discovered to both their mutual worth. It would be a relief after the long strain to rest upon this genial feminine companionship—this warm and kindly heart.

"She will treat me like a friend too—not like her old governess, if you are uneasy about that. Or, if you like it better, I shall be received less as poor Hannah Thelluson than as Mr. Rivers's sister-in-law and Rosie's aunt. I am to go about with her everywhere—she made me quite understand that. A strange, changed life for me; but my life is all so strange!"

And Hannah sighed. She felt as if she had let her oars go, and were drifted about involuntarily, she knew not whither, hardly caring whether she should ever touch land; and if she did, whether it would be as a living woman, or a creature so broken down and battered that she could neither enjoy nor suffer any more? Who could tell? Fate must decide.

Mr. Rivers listened to her silently, but full of thought—thoughts which, perhaps, she could not have followed had she tried. He was a very good man, but he was also a man of the world: he would not have been a Rivers else. He saw at once the advantage of Lady Dunsmore's countenance—not merely because she happened to be a marquis's daughter and an earl's wife, but because in any society she was the sort of person whose friendship was valued and valuable. Was it human nature, or only masculine nature, that, dearly as he loved Hannah, Bernard unconsciously prized her the more because she was prized by such a woman as the Countess of Dunsmore?

"Go, then," he said. "I will not hinder you. Pay your visit; you will be happy; and it will in many ways be a good thing." Then

with a nervous eagerness that, in spite of her reason, pained Hannah acutely—"When does she want you? How soon can you start?"

"Any day, since you are so glad to get rid of me."

"Oh, Hannah!"

They stood side by side, these two lovers, between whom was a barrier slight and invisible as glass, yet as impossible to be broken through without sore danger and pain. They could not break it; they dared not.

"Things are hard for us—very hard," said Bernard, almost in a groan. "We shall be better apart—at least for a time. I meant to have gone away myself to-morrow; but if you will go instead——"

"I cannot to-morrow. I will as soon as I can."

"Thank you."

She did not sob, though her throat was choking; she only prayed. Dimly she understood what he was suffering; but she knew he suffered very much. She knew, too, that however strangely it came out,—in bitterness, anger, neglect, still the love was there, burning with the intensity of a smothered fire—all the more for being suppressed. The strength which one, at least, of them must have, she inly cried to heaven for—and gained.

"Good-bye," she said; "for we shall not talk thus together again. It is better not."

"I know it is. But you love me: I need not doubt that?"

"Yes, I love you," she whispered. "Whatever happens, remember that; and oh! keep me in your heart till death."

"I will," he said; and snatching her close, held her there, tight and fast. For one minute only; then letting her go, he bade her once more "Good-night and good-bye," and went away.

Three days after, Miss Thelluson, the child, and the nurse started for London together, Mr. Rivers himself seeing them off from the railway.

Rosie was in an ecstasy of delight—to be "going in a puff-puff with Tannie" being to the little maid the crown of all human felicity. She kept pulling at her papa's hand, and telling him over and over again of her bliss; and every time he stopped and listened, but scarcely answered a word. Grace, too, looked glad to go. Easterham, with James Dixon still hovering about, was a cruel place for her to live in. Hannah only looked grave and pale; but she smiled whenever her little girl smiled; and to the one or two persons who spoke to her at the railway station,—where, of course, they were known to everybody,—she spoke also in her usual gentle way.

Only when Mr. Rivers kissed Rosie, saying, "Papa will miss his little girl," and then turning, shook hands with her silently, Hannah grew deadly pale for a minute. That was all. The train moved off, and she saw him walking back, solitary, to his empty house.

Life has many anguishes; but perhaps the sharpest of all is an anguish of which nobody knows.

## CHAPTER XII.

As we walk along, staggering under some heavy burthen, or bleeding with some unseen wound, how often do the small perplexities of life catch at us unawares, like briers, and vex us sore. Hannah, as she felt herself borne fast away from Easterham, conscious of a sense, half of relief, and half of bitter loss, was conscious, too, of a ridiculously small thing which had not occurred to her till now, and which she would never have cared for on her own account, but she did on Bernard's. This was—How would Lady Dunsmore manage to receive back in her household, as an equal and familiar friend, her *ci-devant* governess? Not that Miss Thelluson had ever been treated in the way governesses are said to be treated, though it is usually their own fault; but she had, of course, taken her position, both with guests and servants, simply as the governess, and never sought to alter it. But this position Rosie's aunt and Mr. Rivers's sister-in-law could no longer suitably hold. As the cab drove up to the old family mansion in Mayfair which she knew so well, Hannah felt a sense of uncomfortableness for which she was almost angry with herself.

But it was needless. Lady Dunsmore had that true nobility which, discovering the same in others, recognises it at once, and acts accordingly. The slight difficulty which an inferior woman might have bungled over, she, with her gracious, graceful frankness, solved at once.

"You will establish Miss Thelluson and her niece in the blue rooms," said she to the housekeeper, who, seeing who the arrival was, came forward with a pleased but patronising air. "And see that everything is made comfortable for the child and nurse, and that my friend here shall feel as much at home as if she were in her own house."

"Certainly, my lady." And the wise old woman slipped quietly behind her back the hand she was extending to Miss Thelluson, till Miss Thelluson took and shook it cordially, then curtseying, Mrs. Rhodes followed her respectfully to the blue rooms, which, as everybody knew, being in communication with the countess's, were never assigned but to her favourite guests.

Thus, domestically, the critical point was settled at once. Socially, too, with equal decision.

"My friend, Miss Thelluson," said Lady Dunsmore, introducing her at once to two ladies, aunts of Lord Dunsmore, who were in the drawing-room, and whom Hannah knew well enough, as they her, by sight. "We are so glad to have her back among us, with her little niece. She will be such a welcome visitor, and my little girls will perfectly spoil the child, if only for her sake; they were so fond of Miss Thelluson."

And when, to prove this, Lady Blanche and Lady Mary came in leading little Rosie between them, and clung lovingly round their old governess's neck, Hannah felt perfectly happy—ay, even though Bernard was far away; and the remembrance of him striding forlornly to his deserted home, came across her like a painful, reproachful vision. And yet it was not unnatural. The transition from perplexity to peace, from suspicion to tender respect, from indifference or coldness to warm welcoming love, was very sweet. Not until the strain was taken off her, did Hannah feel how terrible it had been.

When Lady Dunsmore, as if to prove decisively the future relation in which they were to stand, came into her room before dinner, and sitting down in her white dressing-gown before the hearth—where aunt and niece were arranging together a beautiful Noah's ark—put her hand on Miss Thelluson's shoulder, saying, "My dear, I hope you will make yourself quite happy with us,"—Hannah very nearly broke down.

The countess stooped and began caressing the child, making solemn inquiries of her as to Noah and Mrs. Noah, their sons and sons' wives, and arranging them in a dignified procession across the rug.

"What a happy-looking little woman she is—this Rosie! And I hope her auntie is happy too? As happy as she expected to be?"

Hannah's self-control was sorely tested. This year past she had lived in an atmosphere of mingled bliss and torment, of passionate love and equally passionate coldness: been exposed to alternations of calm civility and rudeness almost approaching unkindness: but it was long since any one—any woman—had spoken to her in that frank, affectionate tone. She felt that Lady Dunsmore understood her; and when two good women once do this, they have a key to one another's hearts, such as no man, be he ever so dear, can quite get hold of.

As Hannah laid her cheek against the pretty soft hand—none the less soft that its grasp was firm, and none the less pretty that it sparkled with diamonds—the tears came stealing down, and with them was near stealing out that secret which all the taunts in the world would never have forced from her.

But it must not be. It would compromise not herself alone. She knew well—she had long made up her mind to the fact—that unless Bernard and she could be legally married, the relations between them must be kept strictly between their two selves. The world might guess as it chose—accuse as it chose, but not one confirmatory word must it get out of either of them. Out of her, certainly, it never should.

Therefore, she looked steadily up into her friend's face. "Yes; my little girl makes me very happy. You were right in once saying that a woman is only half a woman till she has a child. Of her own, you meant; but it is true even if not her own. I have found it to be so. I have almost forgotten I am not Rosie's real mother."

And then, aware of a keen inquisitiveness in Lady Dunsmore's look, Hannah blushed violently.

The countess dropped down again beside Noah's ark, and occupied herself, to Rosie's intense delight, in making a bridge over which all the animals could pass out, till the child and her new playfellow became the best of friends.

"Rosie is not much like her father, I think; and yet she has a look of him—his bright, merry look, such as he had before his trouble came. Is he getting over it at all? It is now a good while since your poor sister died."

"Rosie's age tells it—nearly three years."

"That is a long time for a man to mourn now a days. But——" checking herself, "I always thought Mr. Rivers very faithful-hearted, constant in his friendships, and, therefore, in his loves; and knowing how forlorn a man is who has once been married, I, for one, should never blame him if he made a second choice."

Hannah was silent; then seeing Lady Dunsmore paused for some acquiescence, she gave it in one or two meaningless words.

"And meantime, I conclude, you remain at Easterham. Your brother-in-law evidently appreciates your society, and the blessing you are to his little girl. He said as much to me. He told me he did not know what Rosie would have done without you, and that you and she are never to be parted. Is it so?"

"He has promised me that I shall have her always."

"Even in case of his second marriage? But I beg your pardon, I really have no right to be curious about Mr. Rivers's domestic arrangements—I know him too slightly; but yet I cannot help taking an interest in him, for his own sake as well as for yours."

She pressed the hand she held, but asked no further questions—made no attempt whatever to find out what Hannah did not choose to tell. That noble confidence which exists among women oftener than they are given credit for, when each knows quite well the other's secret, but never betrays either to her friend or a stranger the silent, mutual trust—was henceforward established between the two. The moment Lady Dunsmore had closed the door, after talking a good while of Dunsmore topics, of her daughters, her husband, and a journey she wanted to take, only was hindered by Lord Dunsmore's determination to wait and vote for a bill that he greatly desired to see pass the House of Lords—"the Bill concerning deceased wife's sisters, in which you know he was always so interested"—Hannah felt certain that this sharp-witted little lady guessed her whole position as well as if she had told it. Also that she would keep the discovery herself, and aid in defending it from the outside world, as sacredly as if she had been pledged to inviolable secrecy, and bound by the honour of all the Dacres and Dunsmares.

With a sense of self-respect, and self-contentedness, greater than



she had known for some time, Hannah dressed for dinner. Carefully too; for Bernard's sake;—since if the Countess guessed anything, she would have liked her to feel that it was not so unnatural, Bernard's loving her. On his account she was glad to be held an honoured guest; glad to be met cordially, and talked to with courteous attention at dinner-time by a man like the Earl of Dunsmore. Who, though rumour said his wife had made him all that he was—had roused him from the *dolce far niente* life of an idle young nobleman into a hard-working man, was a person who in any rank of life would have been useful and esteeme. And he spoke of Bernard—whom he said he had met several times when in London—with warm regard.

This was sweet to her; and equally sweet was the unconscious contrast of coming back to her old haunts under new conditions and circumstances. Often, during some pause of silence, she secretly counted up her blessings—how rich she was who had once been so poor. And when, at dessert, there stole in, hand-in-hand with little Lady Isabel, who had grown from a baby into a big girl since Miss Thelluson left, a certain white fairy in blue ribbons, who, looking round the dazzling room with a pretty bewilderedness, caught sight of one known face, and ran and hid her own lovingly in Tannie's lap,—Tannie's heart leaped with joy. The child—her own child!—nothing and nobody could take that treasure from her. She and Bernard might never be married; weary of long waiting, he might give up loving her, and marry some one else; but he was a man of honour—he would always leave her the child.

"Rosie does you the greatest credit," said Lord Dunsmore, smiling at the little woman, and trying to win her—but vainly—from Tannie's arms. "She is a charming child."

Hannah laughed. "Then you will endorse the proverb about old maids' children?" said she.

Was it because he looked at her, or because of her own conscious heart, that one of those horrible sudden blushes came, and with it the sense of hypocrisy—of always bearing about with her a secret, which, sinless as she felt it was, everybody might not consider so. For even this night, though the dinner-circle was small—Lord Dunsmore's known advocacy of the Bill, caused it to be discussed on all sides—argued *pro* and *con* by friends and enemies, in a way that neither host nor hostess could repress without attracting attention. At length, perhaps out of wise kindness, they ceased trying to repress it, and Hannah heard the whole question of whether a man might or might not marry his deceased wife's sister argued out logically and theologically, as she had never heard it before, together with all the legal chances for and against the Bill. She could not shut her ears—she dared not: for what to all these others was a mere question of social or political opinion, was to her a matter of life and death.

So she sat quiet, keeping, by a strong effort, her countenance as still as a stone, and her voice, when she had to speak, just like that of any other dinner-table guest, who joined placidly, or carelessly, or combatively, in the conversation that was going on. It was best so; best to buckle on at once the armour that, in all probability, she would have to wear through life.

Lord Dunsmore seemed hopeful of his cause. He had entered into it, unlike many others, from purely impersonal motives—from a simple sense of right and justice; and he had a strong faith, he said, that the right would conquer at last.

"Not," he added laughing, "that I want to compel every man to marry his deceased wife's sister, as some people seem to think I do; I am sure I have not the slightest wish ever to marry mine! But I consider all restrictions upon marriage made by neither God nor nature, a mistake and a wrong. And any law which creates a false and unnatural position between man and woman is an equal wrong. Let there be no shams. Let a man have his natural mother, sister, wife, but no anomalous relationships which pretending to all, are in reality none of the three."

"And," said Lady Dunsmore mischievously, "such is the nature of man, that when all these pretty pretences were broken down, and a man must either marry a lady or have nothing to say to her, I believe he would choose the latter course. You are such contradictory creatures, you men, that I suspect as soon as all of you might marry your wives' sisters, you would none of you desire to do it! But, come, we ladies have had enough of the Marriages Bill, though everybody must put up with it in this house; for when my husband gets a hobby he rides it to death. I ride with him, too, on this one," she added, as stepping aside to let her matron guests pass into the drawing-room, she quietly, and without any apparent intention, took hold of Miss Thelluson's hand. There was something in the warm, firm clasp, so sympathetic, that for very gratitude Hannah could have wept.

The subject ended with the closing of the dining-room door; no one suspecting for a moment that one guest present had a vital interest therein. The ladies gathered round the fire, and the countess, who was as popular and agreeable with her own sex as she was with gentlemen, began talking gaily of other things. And so Hannah's ordeal, from which no one could save her, from which it would have been dangerous to attempt to save her, passed by for the time being.

It was a very happy evening; not exactly a family evening—the public life the Dunsмоres led precluded that—but with a great deal of familiness about it; more than Hannah had ever imagined could be, in the days when she sat aloof in her attic parlour, and spent her lonely evenings, empty of love, and feeling that love would never revisit her

more. Now, when she saw Lord Dunsmore speak caressingly to his wife, and watched one young couple slip away into the inner parlour—Lady Dunsmore had a proverbial faculty of allowing young people to fall in love at her house; not make a marriage, but really fall in love—Hannah remembered, with a strange leap of the heart, that her love-days, too, were to come—not past.

Yes, she had been loved—she was loved—even like these. She had felt once—just once—Bernard's arms close around her, and his kiss upon her mouth; and when, solemnly and tenderly rather than passionately, she thought of this—in the very house and among the very people, where she had once been so lonely, yet not unblest or discontented in her loneliness—it seemed as if she could never be lonely any more.

When she quitted the drawing-room—coming out of the glitter and the show, yet not unreal or painful show; for there was heart-warmth beneath it all—and went back into her own room, Hannah was happy too.

For there, from a crib in the corner, came the soft breathing of “auntie's darling,” who always slept beside her now. She had taken her during some slight illness of Grace's, and could not again relinquish the fond charge. It gave her such a sense of rest, and peace, and content—the mere consciousness of little Rosie asleep beside her—it seemed to drive away all the evil angels that sometimes haunted her, the regrets and despondencies over a lot that such a little more would have made quite perfect; and yet that little could not be. Regrets, all the sharper that they were not altogether for herself. For she had Rosie; and she was secretly, almost contritely, aware that Rosie was almost enough to make her happy. Not so with Bernard. As she sat over her pleasant fire, she could have blamed herself for that peace of heart in which he could not share.

He had begged her to write to him regularly, and she had agreed; for she saw no reason why both should not take every comfort that fate allowed them. Yet when she sat down she knew not what to say. How was she to write to him—as her brother, her friend, her betrothed? He was all three, and yet neither; and he might never be anything else.

She dropped her pen, and fell into deep thought. Putting herself entirely aside, was it right to allow Bernard, a young man in the prime of his days, to bind himself by an uncertain bond, which debarred him from the natural joys of life, and exposed him to the continual torment of hope deferred, which to a woman would be hard enough, but to a man was all but unendurable.

Now that she was away from Easterham—escaped from the nightmare-like influence of the life, half bliss, half torture, which she had led there—she tried to feel in this new place like a new person, and to judge her own position calmly, as if it had been that of some one

else. She thought over, deliberately, every word she had heard from Lord Dunsmore and others that night, and tried to count what reasonable chances there were of the only thing which could ever make her Bernard's wife—the passing of the Bill they had talked about. Vain speculation—as hundreds in this land know only too well. The result was, that instead of the letter she had meant to write, she sat down and wrote another. Such an one as many a woman has written, too, with bleeding heart and streaming eyes, though the words may have been calm and cold. She implored him for his own sake to consider whether he could not conquer his ill-fated love for herself, and find among the many charming girls he was always meeting, some one whom he could love and marry, and be happy.

"I only want you to be happy," she wrote. "I shall never blame you—never tell any human being you once cared for me. And you will think of me tenderly still—as you do of my sister Rosa. And you will leave me Rosa's child?"

Then she planned, in her clear, common-sense way, how this was to be managed; how he was to pay her a yearly sum—she would refuse nothing—for the maintenance of her niece, whom she would herself educate, perhaps abroad, which would make an ostensible reason for the separation.

"She will comfort me for all I lose, more than you think. She will be a bit of her mother and of you, always beside me; and your letting me take care of her will be almost equivalent to your taking care of me, as you wanted to do, but my hard fate would not allow it."

And then all she was resigning rushed back upon Hannah's mind; the sweetness of being loved, the tenfold sweetness of loving.

"Oh, my Bernard, my Bernard!" she sobbed, and thought if she could once again, for only one minute, have her arms round his neck, and her head on his shoulder, the giving him up would be less hard. And she wondered how she could have been so thoughtlessly happy an hour ago, when things were in exactly the same position as now, only she saw them in a different light. Hers was one of those bitter destinies, in which the aspect of circumstances, often even of duties, changed every hour.

Still, re-reading her letter, she felt it must go, just as it was. It was right he should know her exact mind, and be set free to act as was best for himself. She finished and sealed it; but she wept over it very much, so much that her child heard her.

A little white ghost with rosy cheeks peeped over the crib-side, and stared, half-frightened, round the unfamiliar room.

"Rosie wake up! Tannie tying! Then Rosie ty too." Then came a little wail—"Tannie take her, in Tannie own arms!"

No resisting that. All love-anguish, love-yearning, fled far away;

and Hannah half-forgot Bernard in her innocent passion for Bernard's child.

The letter went, but it brought no answer back. At first Hannah scarcely expected one. He would naturally take time to consider his decision, and she had put it to him as an absolute decision, proposing that, after this event, neither she nor Rosie should go back to Easterham. If he was to be free, the sooner he was free the better. Suspense was sore, as she knew.

A letter of his had crossed hers, written at the very hour she wrote, but in oh! such a different tone,—a real love-letter, out of the deepest heart of an impulsive man, to whom nothing seems impossible. How hard, how cruel must hers have seemed! Still, she was glad she had written it. More and more, the misery of a woman who feels that her love is not a blessing, but a misfortune, to her lover, forced itself upon Hannah's mind. Through all the present pleasantness of her life, her long idle mornings with her darling, her afternoons with Lady Dunsmore, shopping, visiting, or enjoying that charming companionship which was fast growing into the deliberate friendship of middle age, often firmer than that of youth,—through all this came the remembrance of Bernard, not as a joy, as at first, but an actual pain.

For his silence continued: nay, seemed to be intentionally maintained. He forwarded her letters in blank envelopes, without a single word. Was he offended? Had she, in her very love, struck him so hard that he could not forgive the blow?

"I hope your brother-in-law is well," Lady Dunsmore would say, courteously looking away while Hannah opened the daily letter, at first with a trembling anxiety, afterwards with a stolid patience that expected nothing. "We shall be delighted to see him here. And, tell him, he ought to come soon, or his little girl will forget him. Three weeks is a long trial of memory at her age."

"Oh, Rosie will not forget papa. And he is busy—very busy in his parish." For Hannah could not bear he should be, thought to neglect his child.

Yet how explain that she could not deliver the message, could not write to him, or ask him to come? His possible coming was the greatest dread she had. Apart from him she could be stern and prudent: but she knew if he stood before her, with his winning looks and ways—his sisters sometimes declared that from babyhood nobody ever could say no to Bernard—all her wisdom would melt away in utter tenderness.

By-and-by, the fear, or the hope—it seemed a strange mixture of both—came true. One day, returning from a drive, leaving Lady Dunsmore behind somewhere, she was told there was a gentleman waiting for her.

"Papa! papa! Dat papa's stick!" shrieked Rosie in an ecstasy, as her sharp young eyes caught sight of it in the hall.

Hannah's heart stood still; but she must go on, the child dragged her. And Rosie, springing into papa's arms, was a shield to her aunt greater than she knew.

Mr. Rivers kissed his little girl fondly. Then wasting no time in sentiment, the butterfly creature struggled down from him, and offered him a dilapidated toy.

"Rosie's horse broken—papa mend it."

"Papa wishes he could mend it, with a few other broken things!" said Mr. Rivers bitterly, till, seeing Rosie's pitiful face, he added, "Never mind, my little woman; papa will try. Go with Grace now, and I will come and see Rosie presently."

And so he shut the door upon nurse and child, in a way that made Hannah see clearly he was determined to speak with her alone. But his first words were haughty and cold.

"I suppose it is scarcely necessary for me to apologise for coming to see my daughter? I had likewise another errand in London—Adeline is here, consulting a doctor. She has been worse of late."

"I am very sorry."

Then he burst out:—"You seem to be sorry for everybody in the world—except me! How could you write me that letter? As if my fate were not hard enough before, but you must go and make it harder."

"I wished to lighten it."

"How? By telling me to go and marry some one else? What sort of creature do you think a man must be—more, what sort of creature is he likely to grow to—who loves one woman and marries another? For I love you. You may not be young, or beautiful, or clever. I sometimes wonder what there is about you that makes me love you. I fight against my love with every argument in my power. But there it is, and it will not be beaten down. I will marry you, Hannah, if I can. If not, I will have as much of you—your help, your companionship, as ever I can. When are you coming home?"

"Home?"

"I say it is home: it must be. Where else should you go to? I cannot be parted from my daughter. Rosie cannot be parted from you. For Rosie's sake, my house must be your home."

"What shall I do?" said Hannah, wringing her hands. "What shall I do?"

She thought she had made her meaning plain enough: but here was the work all to do over again. If she had ever doubted Bernard's loving her, she had no doubt of it now. It was one of those mysterious attractions, quite independent of external charms, and deepened by every influence that daily intimacy can exercise. She

fully believed him when he said, as he kept saying over and over again, that if he did not marry her he would never marry any other woman. And was she to bid him go away, and never see her more? This when their love was no unholy love, when it trenched upon no natural rights, when no living soul could be harmed by it, and many benefited, as well as they themselves?

Hannah could not do it. All her resolutions melted into air, and she let him see that it was so. Anyhow, he saw his power, and used it. With a hungry heart he clasped and kissed her.

"Now we are friends again. I have been hating you for days, but I'll forgive you now. You will not write me any more such letters? We will try not to quarrel again."

"Quarrel! O Bernard!" and then she made him let her go, insisting that they must be friends, and only friends, just now.

"Perhaps you are right. I beg your pardon. Only let me hold your hand."

And so they sat together, silent, for ever so long, till both had recovered from their agitation. Hannah made him tell her about Adeline, who was fast declining, nobody quite saw why; but they thought some London doctor might find it out. And Adeline herself was eager to come.

"Chiefly, I think, because you are here. She wants you, she says. She will not have any of her own sisters to nurse her; to Bertha especially she has taken a violent dislike, only we don't mind the fancies of an invalid. I brought Adeline up to town myself. Her husband had some business to attend to; but he comes up with Bertha to-morrow."

"He should have come with his wife to-day," and then Hannah stopped herself. Of what use was it to open the family eyes to an impossible, and therefore imaginary wrong? What good would it do? probably much harm. Yet her heart ached for unfortunate Adeline.

She suggested going at once to see her, for Bernard had left her close at hand, in one of those dreary lodgings, which seem chiefly occupied by invalids, the most of London fashionable physicians living in streets hard by. Their patients come to be near them, settling down for a few weeks in these sad rooms to recover or to die, as fate might choose.

"Yes, do let me go," repeated Hannah. "Shall I fetch Rosie to play with papa while I leave a message for Lady Dunsmore?"

When she came back with the child in her arms Bernard told her she looked quite her old self again. So did he. And she was glad to throw the shield of their former peaceful, simple life over the strong passion that she perceived in him, and felt more and more in herself—the smothered, silent tragedy which might embitter all their coming days.

And yet when she found herself walking with him in the safe lone-

liness of Regent Street crowds, Hannah was not unhappy. Her long want of him had made him terribly dear. He, too, appeared to snatch at the present moment with a wild avidity.

"Only to be together—together," said he, as he drew her arm through his and kept it there. And the love thus cruelly suppressed seemed to both a thing compared to which all young people's love— young people who can woo and marry like the rest of the world— was pale and colourless. Theirs, resistance had but strengthened, because it was only a struggle against circumstance: unmingled with any conscience-stings, like as of those who fight against some sinful passion. But their passion, though legally forbidden, was morally pure and free from blame.

So they walked on together; content, accepting the joy of the hour, making gay remarks and peeping into shop-windows, in a childish sort of way, till they reached the gloomy house where Bernard's sister lay. Then they forgot themselves and thought only of her.

Adeline was greatly changed. Never very pretty, now she was actually plain. There was a sickly ghastliness about her, a nervous, fretful look, which might be either mental or physical, probably was a combination of both. Not a pleasant wife for a man to come home to; and young Mr. Melville, who was a mere ordinary country squire, without any tastes beyond hunting, shooting, and fishing, was a little to be pitied too. Still men must take their wives, as women their husbands, for better for worse.

"I am very ill, you see, Miss Thelluson," said the invalid, stretching out a weary hand. "It was very kind of Bernard to take all this trouble to bring me up to a London doctor, but I don't think it will do any good."

Hannah uttered some meaningless hope, but faintly, for she saw death in the girl's face. She was only a girl still, and yet in some ways it was the face of an old woman. The smothered pangs of half a lifetime seemed written there.

"I bring good news," said Bernard cheerfully. "I found a letter in the hall saying that Herbert will be here to-morrow, possibly even to-night."

Adeline looked up eagerly.

"To-night! And anybody with him?"

"Bertha, I believe. Her mother insisted she should come."

A miserable fire flashed in the poor sunken eyes.

"She shall not come! I will not have her! I want no sisters; my maid is nurse enough. Besides, it is all a sham, a wretched sham. Bertha has no notion of nursing anybody!"

"I think you are mistaken, dear," said Bernard soothingly. "Hannah, what do you say? Ought not her sister to be with her?"

Hannah dropped her eyes; and yet she felt the miserable girl was watching her with an eagerness actually painful, as if trying to find



out how much she guessed of her dreary secret; which, weak and silly as she was in most things, poor Adeline had evidently kept with a bravery worthy of a better cause.

"I see no use in Bertha's coming," said she again, with a great effort at self-control. "I know her better than Hannah does. She is no companion to an invalid; she hates sickness. She will be always with Herbert, not with me. I heard them planning Rotten Row in the morning, and theatres every night. They are strong, and healthy, and lively, while I——"

The poor young wife burst into tears.

"I will stay beside her," whispered Hannah to Bernard. "Go you away."

After he was gone Adeline burst out hysterically: "Keep her away from me! the sight of her will drive me wild. Keep them all away from me, or I shall betray myself, I know I shall. And then they will all laugh at me, and say it is ridiculous nonsense; as perhaps it is. You see"—clutching Hannah's hand—"she is by law his sister too. He couldn't marry her, not if I were dead twenty times over. Sometimes I wish he could, and then they dared not go on as they do. I could turn her out of the house, like any other strange woman who was stealing my husband's heart from me!"

Hannah made no answer; tried to seem as if she did not hear. Incurable griefs are sometimes best let alone; but this of Adeline's, having once burst its bonds, would not be let alone.

"Tell me," she said, grasping Hannah's hand—"you are a good woman—you will tell me true—is it all nonsense my feeling this as I do? How would you feel if you were in my place? And if you were Bertha would you do as she does? Would you try to make your sister's husband fond of you, as he ought not to be of any woman except his wife, and then say 'Oh, it's all right, we're brother and sister?' But is it right? Hannah Thelluson, is it right? Suppose your sister had been living, how would it have been between you and Bernard?"

A startling way of putting the question, far more so than the questioner dreamed of. For a moment, Hannah winced, and then her strong, clear, common sense, as well as her sense of justice, came to the rescue and righted her at once.

"You might as well ask how would it have been between me and any other woman's husband in whose house I happened to stay. Of course he would have been nothing to me—nothing whatever. I am not married," she added, smiling, "and I cannot quite judge of married people's feelings. But I think if I ever loved a man well enough to be his wife, I should not be a jealous wife at all. Sister or friend might come about the house as much as he chose. I could trust him, for I could trust myself. I would be so much to him that he would never care for anybody but me. That is, while living.

When I was dead"—there Hannah paused, and tried solemnly to put herself in the place of a dead wife—of Bernard's dead wife viewing him tenderly from the celestial sphere—"if the same love for my sister or my friend, which would be his degradation in my lifetime, could be his blessing afterwards, let him take it, and be blessed!"

Adeline looked astounded. But the hidden sore had been opened, the cleansing healing touch had been applied. There was a reasonableness in her expression, as she replied—

"That is altogether a new notion of love. You might not feel so if you were married, or if you were really fond of anybody. Now I was very fond of Herbert, even when I knew he liked Bertha. But when he liked me, and married me—seeing that it made him safe never to marry my sister—I thought I could not possibly be jealous again. No more I am, in one sense. They will never do anything wrong. But there's a great deal short of doing wrong that breaks a wife's heart; and they have broken mine—they have broken mine!"

Again rose up the feeble wail of the weak affectionate soul, who yet had not the power to win or command affection. From sheer pity, Hannah forbore to blame.

"Why not speak to them plainly?" suggested she at last. "Why not tell them they are making you unhappy?"

"And be laughed at for my pains, as a sickly, jealous-minded fool! Because he can't ever marry her—the law forbids that, you know. After I am dead he must choose somebody else, and she too, and nobody will blame them for anything; and yet they have killed me."

"Hush—hush!" said Hannah; "that is not true—not right. You yourself allowed they meant no harm, and will never do anything wrong."

"What is wrong?" cried poor Adeline piteously. "I want my husband—his company, his care, his love; and I don't get him. He turns to somebody else. And I hate that somebody—even if she is my own sister. And I wish I could drive her out of the house—that I do! or shame her openly, as if she were any strange girl who dared come flirting with my husband. They're wicked women all of them, and they break the hearts of us poor wives!"

There was a certain bitter truth under Adeline's frenzied fancies; but Hannah had no time to reply to either. For, while they were talking, there was a bustle outside. Gay, blooming, excited with her journey, Bertha Rivers burst in, Mr. Melville following her.

"So I am come, Addy dear, though you didn't want me. But you'll be glad of me, I know. Why you're looking quite rosy again; isn't she, Herbert?"

Rosy she was; for her cheeks burnt like coals. But the husband, as he carelessly kissed her, never found it out; and Bertha, in her redundant health and exuberant spirits, never noticed the dead silence

of her sister's welcome—the sullen way in which she turned her face to the wall, and left them to their chatter and their mirth.

It was the same all the evening; for Hannah, at Adeline's earnest request, had stayed. Mrs. Melville scarcely spoke a word. Their plans were discussed, sometimes including her, sometimes not; but all were talked of freely before her. It never seemed to occur to any one—not even to Bernard—that Adeline was dying. And with that wonderful self-command which perhaps only the conscious approach of death could have given to so weak a nature, Adeline never betrayed, by look or word, the secret jealousy that at any rate had helped to sap her frail life away.

“Come and see me every day,” she whispered when Miss Thelluson wished her good-bye. “I’ll try and remember what you said; but please forget everything I said. Let nobody guess at it. I shall not trouble any of them very long.”

Hannah walked home, strangely silent and sad, even though she was beside Bernard; and feeling, as one often is forced to feel, that other people's miseries would perhaps be worse to bear than one's own.

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# SAINT PAULS.

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NOVEMBER, 1871.

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WILFRID CUMBERMEDE.

*An Autobiographical Story.*

By GEORGE MACDONALD, AUTHOR OF "ALEC FORBES," ETC.

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## CHAPTER XLIX.

### A DISCLOSURE.

MR. CONINGHAM was at my door by ten o'clock, and we set out together for Umberden Church. It was a cold clear morning. The dying autumn was turning a bright thin defiant face upon the conquering winter. I was in great spirits, my mind being full of Mary Osborne. At one moment I saw but her own ordinary face, only, what I had used to regard as dulness I now interpreted as the possession of her soul in patience; at another I saw the glorified countenance of my Athanasia, knowing that beneath the veil of the other, this, the real, the true face ever lay. Once in my sight, the frost-clung flower had blossomed; in full ideal of glory it had shone for a moment, and then folding itself again away, had retired into the regions of faith. And while I knew that such could dawn out of such, how could I help hoping that from the face of the universe, however to my eyes it might sometimes seem to stare like the seven-days-dead, one morn might dawn the unspeakable face which even Moses might not behold lest he should die of the great sight? The keen air, the bright sunshine, the swift motion—all combined to raise my spirits to an unwonted pitch; but it was a silent ecstasy, and I almost forgot the presence of Mr. Coningham. When he spoke at last, I started.

"I thought from your letter you had something to tell me, Mr. Cumbermede," he said, coming alongside of me.

"Yes, to be sure. I have been reading my grannie's papers as I told you."

I recounted the substance of what I had found in them.

"Does it not strike you as rather strange that all this should have been kept a secret from you?" he asked.

"Very few know anything about their grandfathers," I said; "so I suppose very few fathers care to tell their children about them."

"That is because there are so few concerning whom there is anything worth telling."

"For my part," I returned, "I should think any fact concerning one of those who link me with the infinite past out of which I have come, invaluable. Even a fact which is not to the credit of an ancestor may be a precious discovery to the man who has in himself to fight the evil derived from it."

"That however is a point of view rarely taken. What the ordinary man values is also rare; hence few regard their ancestry, or transmit any knowledge they may have of those who have gone before them to those that come after them."

"My uncle, however, I suppose, told *me* nothing because, unlike the many, he prized neither wealth nor rank nor what are commonly considered great deeds."

"You are not far from the truth there," said Mr. Coningham in a significant tone.

"Then *you* know why he never told me anything!" I exclaimed.

"I do—from the best authority."

"His own, you mean, I suppose."

"I do."

"But—but—I didn't know you were ever—at all—intimate with my uncle," I said.

He laughed knowingly.

"You would say, if you didn't mind speaking the truth, that you thought your uncle disliked me—disapproved of me. Come now—did he not try to make you avoid me? You needn't mind acknowledging the fact, for when I have explained the reason of it, you will see that it involves no discredit to either of us."

"I have no fear for my uncle."

"You are honest, if not over polite," he rejoined. "—You do not feel so sure about my share. Well, I don't mind who knows it, for my part. I roused the repugnance, to the knowledge of which your silence confesses, merely my acting as any professional man ought to have acted—and with the best intentions. At the same time, all the blame I should ever think of casting upon him is, that he allowed his high-strung, saintly, I had almost said superhuman ideas to stand in the way of his nephew's prosperity."

"Perhaps he was afraid of that prosperity standing in the way of a better."

"Precisely so. You understand him perfectly. He was one of the best and simplest-minded men in the world."

"I am glad you do him that justice."

"At the same time I do not think he intended you to remain in absolute ignorance of what I am going to tell you. But you see, he died very suddenly. Besides, he could hardly expect I should hold my tongue after he was gone."

"Perhaps, however, he might expect me not to cultivate your acquaintance," I said, laughing to take the sting out of the words.

"You cannot accuse yourself of having taken any trouble in that direction," he returned, laughing also.

"I believe, however," I resumed, "from what I can recall of things he said, especially on one occasion on which he acknowledged the existence of a secret in which I was interested, he did not intend that I should always remain in ignorance of everything he thought proper to conceal from me then."

"I presume you are right. I think his conduct in this respect arose chiefly from anxiety that the formation of your character should not be influenced by the knowledge of certain facts which might unsettle you, and prevent you from reaping the due advantages of study and self-dependence in youth. I cannot however believe that by being open with you I shall now be in any danger of thwarting his plans, for you have already proved yourself a wise, moderate, conscientious man, diligent and painstaking. Forgive me for appearing to praise you. I had no such intention. I was only uttering as a fact to be considered in the question, what upon my honour I thoroughly believe."

"I should be happy in your good opinion, if I were able to appropriate it," I said. "But a man knows his own faults better than his neighbour knows his virtues."

"Spoken like the man I took you for, Mr. Cumbermede," he rejoined gravely.

"But to return to the matter in hand," I resumed: "what can there be so dangerous in the few facts I have just come to the knowledge of, that my uncle should have cared to conceal them from me? That a man born in humble circumstances should come to know that he had distinguished ancestors, could hardly so fill him with false notions as to endanger his relation to the laws of his existence."

"Of course—but you are too hasty. Those facts are of more importance than you are aware—involve other facts. Moldwarp Hall is *your* property and not Sir Giles Brotherton's."

"Then the apple was my own after all!" I said to myself exultingly. It was a strange fantastic birth of conscience and memory, —forgotten the same moment, and followed by an electric flash—not of hope, not of delight, not of pride, but of pure revenge. My whole frame quivered with the shock; yet for a moment I seemed to have the strength of a Hercules. In front of me was a stile through a

high hedge: I turned Lilith's head to the hedge, struck my spurs into her, and over or through it, I know not which, she bounded. Already, with all the strength of will I could summon, I struggled to rid myself of the wicked feeling; and although I cannot pretend to have succeeded for long after, yet by the time Mr. Coningham had popped over the stile, I was waiting for him, to all appearance, I believe, perfectly calm. He on the other hand, from whatever cause, was actually trembling. His face was pale, and his eye flashing. Was it that he had roused me more effectually than he had hoped?

"Take care, take care, my boy," he said, "or you won't live to enjoy your own. Permit me the honour of shaking hands with Sir Wilfrid Cumbermede Daryll."

After this ceremonial of prophetic investiture, we jogged away quietly, and he told me a long story about the death of the last proprietor, the degree in which Sir Giles was related to him, and his undisputed accession to the property. At that time, he said, my father was in very bad health, and indeed died within six months of it.

"I knew your father well, Mr. Cumbermede," he went on, "—one of the best of men, with more spirit—more ambition than your uncle. It was *his* wish that his child, if a boy, should be called Wilfrid,—for though they had been married five or six years, their only child was born after *his* death. Your uncle did not like the name, your mother told me, but made no objection to it. So you were named after your grandfather, and great grandfather, and I don't know how many of the race besides.—When the last of the Darylls died—"

"Then," I interrupted, "my father was the heir."

"No; you mistake: your uncle was the elder—Sir David Cumbermede Daryll, of Moldwarp Hall and The Moat," said Mr. Coningham, evidently bent on making the most of my rights.

"He never even told me he was the eldest," I said. "I always thought from his coming home to manage the farm when my father was ill—that he was the second of the two sons."

"On the contrary, he was several years older than your father—so that you mustn't suppose he kept you back from any of your rights. They were his, not yours, while he lived."

"I will not ask," I said, "why he did not enforce them. That is plain enough from what I know of his character. The more I think of that, the loftier and simpler it seems to grow. He could not bring himself to spend the energies of a soul meant for higher things on the assertion and recovery of earthly rights."

"I rather differ from you there; and I do not know," returned my companion, whose tone was far more serious than I had ever heard it before, "whether the explanation I am going to offer, will raise your uncle as much in your estimation as it does in mine. I confess I do not rank such self-denial as you attribute to him so highly as

you do. On the contrary I count it a fault. How could the world go on if every body was like your uncle?"

"If every body was like my uncle, he would have been forced to accept the position," I said; "for there would have been no one to take it from him."

"Perhaps. But you must not think Sir Giles knew anything of your uncle's claim. He knows nothing of it now."

I had not thought of Sir Giles in connection with the matter—only of Geoffrey; and my heart recoiled from the notion of dispossessing the old man, who, however misled with regard to me at last, had up till then shown me uniform kindness. In that moment I had almost resolved on taking no steps till after his death. But Mr. Coningham soon made me forget Sir Giles in a fresh revelation of my uncle.

"Although," he resumed, "all you say of your uncle's indifference to this world and its affairs is indubitably correct, I do not believe, had there not been a prospect of your making your appearance, that he would have shirked the duty of occupying the property which was his both by law and by nature. But he knew it might be an expensive suit—for no one can tell by what tricks of the law such may be prolonged—in which case all the money he could command would soon be spent, and nothing left either to provide for your so-called aunt, for whom he had a great regard, or to give you that education, which, whether you were to succeed to the property or not, he counted indispensable. He cared far more, he said, about your having such a property in yourself as was at once personal and real, than for your having any amount of property out of yourself. Ex-postulation was of no use. I had previously learned—from the old lady herself—the true state of the case, and, upon the death of Sir Geoffrey Daryll, had at once communicated with him—which placed me in a position for urging him, as I did again and again, considerably to his irritation, to assert and prosecute his claim to the title and estates. I offered to take the whole risk upon myself; but he said that would be tantamount to giving up his personal liberty until the matter was settled, which might not be in his lifetime. I may just mention, however, that besides his religious absorption, I strongly suspect there was another cause of his indifference to worldly affairs: I have grounds for thinking that he was disappointed in a more than ordinary attachment to a lady he met at Oxford—in station considerably above any prospects he had then. To return: he was resolved that whatever might be your fate, you should not have to meet it without such preparation as he could afford you. As you have divined, he was most anxious that your character should have acquired some degree of firmness before you knew any thing of the possibility of your inheriting a large property and historical name; and I may appropriate the credit of a negative share in the carrying out of his plans, for you will bear



me witness how often I might have upset them by informing you of the facts of the case."

"I am heartily obliged to you," I said, "for not interfering with my uncle's wishes, for I am very glad indeed that I have been kept in ignorance of my rights until now. The knowledge would at one time have gone far to render me useless for personal effort in any direction worthy of it. It would have made me conceited, ambitious, boastful: I don't know how many bad adjectives would have been necessary to describe me."

"It is all very well to be modest, but I venture to think differently."

"I should like to ask you one question, Mr. Coningham," I said.

"As many as you please."

"How is it that you have so long delayed giving me the information which on my uncle's death you no doubt felt at liberty to communicate?"

"I did not know how far you might partake of your uncle's disposition, and judged that the wider your knowledge of the world, and the juster your estimate of the value of money and position, the more willing you would be to listen to the proposals I had to make."

"Do you remember," I asked, after a canter, led off by my companion, "one very stormy night on which you suddenly appeared at the Moat, and had a long talk with my uncle on the subject?"

"Perfectly," he answered. "But how did you come to know? He did not tell you of my visit!"

"Certainly not. But, listening in my nightgown on the stair, which is open to the kitchen, I heard enough of your talk to learn the object of your visit—namely, to carry off my skin to make bagpipes with."

He laughed so heartily that I told him the whole story of the pendulum.

"On that occasion," he said, "I made the offer to your uncle, on condition of his sanctioning the commencement of legal proceedings, to pledge myself to meet every expense of those and of your education as well, and to claim nothing whatever in return, except in case of success."

This quite corresponded with my own childish recollections of the interview between them. Indeed there was such an air of simple straightforwardness about his whole communication, while at the same time it accounted so thoroughly for the warning my uncle had given me against him, that I felt I might trust him entirely, and so would have told him all that had taken place at the Hall, but for the share his daughter had borne in it, and the danger of discovery to Mary.

## CHAPTER L.

## THE DATES.

I HAVE given, of course, only an epitome of our conversation, and by the time we had arrived at this point, we had also reached the gate of the churchyard. Again we fastened up our horses; again he took the key from under the tombstone; and once more we entered the dreary little church, and drew aside the curtain of the vestry. I took down the volume of the register. The place was easy to find, seeing, as I have said, it was at the very end of the volume.

The copy I had taken was correct: the date of the marriage in the register was January 15, and it was the first under the 1748, written at the top of the page. I stood for a moment gazing at it; then my eye turned to the entry before it, the last on the preceding page. It bore the date December, 18—under the general date at the top of the page, 1747. The next entry after it was dated March 29. At the bottom of the page, or cover rather, was the attestation of the clergyman to the number of marriages in that year; but there was no such attestation at the bottom of the preceding page. I turned to Mr. Coningham, who had stood regarding me, and, pointing to the book, said—

“Look here, Mr. Coningham. I cannot understand it. Here the date of the marriage is 1748; and that of all their letters, evidently written after the marriage, is 1747.”

He looked, and stood looking, but made me no reply. In my turn I looked at him. His face expressed something not far from consternation; but the moment he became aware that I was observing him, he pulled out his handkerchief, and wiping his forehead with an attempt at a laugh, said—

“How hot it is! Yes; there’s something awkward there. I hadn’t observed it before. I must inquire into that. I confess I cannot explain it all at once. It does certainly seem queer. I must look into those dates when I go home.”

He was evidently much more discomposed than he was willing I should perceive. He always spoke rather hurriedly, but I had never heard him stammer before. I was certain that he saw or at least dreaded something fatal in the discrepancy I had pointed out. As to looking into it when he got home, that sounded very like nonsense. He pulled out a note-book, however, and said:

“I may just as well make a note of the blunder—for blunder it must be—a very awkward one indeed, I am afraid. I should think so—I cannot—But then——”

He went on uttering disjointed and unfinished expressions, while he made several notes. His manner was of one who regards the action he is about as useless, yet would have it supposed the right thing to do.

"There!" he said, shutting up his note-book with a slam; and turning away he strode out of the place—much, it seemed to me, as if his business there was over for ever. I gave one more glance at the volume, and replaced it on the shelf. When I rejoined him, he was already mounted and turning to move off.

"Wait a moment, Mr. Coningham," I said. "I don't exactly know where to put the key."

"Fling it under the gravestone, and come along," he said, muttering something more, in which perhaps I only fancied I heard certain well-known maledictions.

By this time my spirits had sunk as much below their natural level as, a little before, they had risen above it. But I felt that I must be myself, and that no evil any more than good fortune ought for a moment to perturb the tenor of my being. Therefore having locked the door deliberately and carefully, I felt about along the underside of the gravestone until I found the ledge where the key had lain. I then made what haste I could to mount and follow Mr. Coningham, but Lilith delayed the operation by her eagerness. I gave her the rein, and it was well no one happened to be coming in the opposite direction through that narrow and tortuous passage, for she flew round the corners—"turning close to the ground, like a cat when scratchingly she wheels about after a mouse," as my old favourite Sir Philip Sidney says. Notwithstanding her speed, however, when I reached the mouth of the lane, there was Mr. Coningham half across the first field, with his coat-tails flying out behind him. I would not allow myself to be left in such a discourteous fashion, and gave chase. Before he had measured the other half of the field, I was up with him.

"That mare of yours is a clever one," he said, as I ranged alongside of him. "I thought I would give her a breather. She hasn't enough to do."

"She's not breathing so *very* fast," I returned. "Her wind is as good as her legs."

"Let's get along then, for I've lost a great deal of time this morning. I ought to have been at Squire Strobe's an hour ago. How hot the sun is, to be sure, for this time of the year!"

As he spoke, he urged his horse, but I took and kept the lead, feeling, I confess, a little angry, for I could not help suspecting he had really wanted to run away from me. I did what I could, however, to behave as if nothing had happened. But he was very silent, and his manner towards me was quite altered. Neither could I help thinking it scarcely worthy of a man of the world, not to say a lawyer, to show himself so much chagrined. For my part, having simply concluded that the new-blown bubble-hope had burst, I found myself just where I was before—with a bend sinister on my scutcheon,

it might be, but with a good conscience, a tolerably clear brain, and the dream of my Athanasia.

The moment we reached the road, Mr. Coningham announced that his way was in the opposite direction to mine, said his good morning, shook hands with me, and jogged slowly away. I knew that was not the nearest way to Squire Strode's.

I could not help laughing—he had so much the look of a dog with his tail between his legs, or a beast of prey that had made his spring and missed his game. I watched him for some time, for Lilith being pulled both ways—towards home, and after her late companion—was tolerably quiescent, but he never cast a glance behind him. When at length a curve in the road hid him from my sight, I turned and went quietly home, thinking what the significance of the unwelcome discovery might be. If the entry of the marriage under that date could not be proved a mere blunder, of which I could see no hope, then certainly my grandfather must be regarded as born out of wedlock, a supposition which, if correct, would account for the dropping of the *Daryll*.

On the way home, I jumped no hedges.

Having taken my farewell of Lilith, I packed my “bag of necessities,” locked the door of my uncle's room, which I would have no one enter in my absence, and set out to meet the night mail.

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## CHAPTER LI.

### CHARLEY AND CLARA.

On my arrival in London, I found Charley waiting for me, as I had expected; and with his help, soon succeeded in finding, in one of the streets leading from the Strand to the river, the accommodation I wanted. There I settled, and resumed the labour so long and thanklessly interrupted.

When I recounted the circumstances of my last interview with Mr. Coningham, Charley did not seem so much surprised at the prospect which had opened before me as disappointed at its sudden close, and would not admit that the matter could be allowed to rest where it was.

“Do you think the change of style could possibly have anything to do with it?” he asked, after a meditative silence.

“I don't know,” I replied. “Which change of style do you mean?”

“I mean the change of the beginning of the year from March to January,” he answered.

“When did that take place?” I asked.

“Some time about the middle of the last century,” he replied; “but I will find out exactly.”

The next night he brought me the information that the January which, according to the old style would have been that of 1752 was promoted to be the first month of the year 1753.

My dates then were, by several years, antecedent to the change, and it was an indisputable anachronism that the January between the December of 1747 and the March of 1748, should be entered as belonging to the latter year. This seemed to throw a little dubious light upon the perplexity: the January thus entered belonged clearly to 1747, and therefore was the same January with that of my ancestors' letters. Plainly, however, the entry could not stand in evidence, its interpolation at least appearing indubitable, for how otherwise could it stand at the beginning of the new year instead of towards the end of the old, five years before the change of style? Also, I now clearly remembered that it did look a little crushed between the heading of the year and the next entry. It must be a forgery—and a stupid one as well, seeing the bottom of the preceding page, where there was a small blank, would have been the proper place to choose for it—that is, under the heading 1747. Could the 1748 have been inserted afterwards? That did not appear likely, seeing it belonged to all the rest of the entries on the page, there being none between the date in question and March 29, on the 25th of which month the new year began. The conclusion lying at the door was, that some one had inserted the marriage so long after the change of style that he knew nothing of the trap there lying for his forgery. It seemed probable that, blindly following the letters, he had sought to place it in the beginning of the previous year, but, getting bewildered in the apparent eccentricities of the arrangement of month and year, or, perhaps, finding no other blank suitable to his purpose, had at last drawn his bow at a venture. Neither this nor any other theory I could fashion, did I however find in the least satisfactory. All I could be sure of was, that here was no evidence of the marriage—on the contrary a strong presumption against it.

For my part, the dream in which I had indulged had been so short that I very soon recovered from the disappointment of the waking therefrom. Neither did the blot with which the birth of my grandfather was menaced, affect me much. My chief annoyance in regard of that aspect of the affair was in being so related to Geoffrey Brotherton.

I cannot say how it came about, but I could not help observing that, by degrees, a manifest softening appeared in Charley's mode of speaking of his father, although I knew that there was not the least approach to a more cordial intercourse between them. I attributed the change to the letters of his sister, which he always gave me to read. From them I have since classed her with a few others I have since known, chiefly women, the best of their kind, so good and so large-minded that they seem ever on the point of casting aside

the unworthy opinions they have been taught, and showing themselves the true followers of him who cared only for the truth; and yet holding by the doctrines of men, and believing them to be the mind of God.

In one or two of Charley's letters to her, I ventured to insert a question or two, and her reference to these in her replies to Charley, gave me an opportunity of venturing to write to her more immediately, in part defending what I thought the truth, in part expressing all the sympathy I honestly could with her opinions. She replied very kindly, very earnestly, and with a dignity of expression as well as of thought which harmonized entirely with my vision of her deeper and grander nature.

The chief bent of my energies was now to vindicate for myself a worthy position in the world of letters; but my cherished hope lay in the growth of such an intimacy with Mary Osborne as might afford ground for the cultivation of far higher and more precious ambitions.

It was not however with the design of furthering these that I was now guilty of what will seem to most men a Quixotic action enough.

"Your sister is fond of riding—is she not?" I asked Charley one day, as we sauntered with our cigars on the terrace of the Adelphi.

"As fond as one can possibly be who has had so little opportunity," he said.

"I was hoping to have a ride with her and Clara the very evening when that miserable affair occurred. The loss of that ride was at least as great a disappointment to me as the loss of the sword."

"You seem to like my sister, Wilfrid," he said.

"At least I care more for her good opinion than I do for any woman's—or man's either, Charley."

"I am so glad!" he responded. "You like her better than Clara then?"

"Ever so much," I said.

He looked more pleased than annoyed, I thought—certainly neither the one nor the other entirely. His eyes sparkled, but there was a flicker of darkness about his forehead.

"I am very glad," he said again, after a moment's pause. "I thought—I was afraid—I had fancied sometimes—you were still a little in love with Clara."

"Not one atom," I returned. "She cured me of that quite. There is no danger of that any more," I added—foolishly, seeing I intended no explanation.

"How do you mean?" he asked, a little uneasily.

I had no answer ready, and a brief silence followed. The subject was not resumed.

It may well seem strange to my reader that I had never yet informed him of the part Clara had had in the matter of the sword.

But, as I have already said, when anything moved me very deeply, I was never ready to talk about it. Somehow, whether from something of the cat-nature in me, I never liked to let go my hold of it without good reason. Especially I shrunk from imparting what I only half comprehended; and besides, in the present case, the thought of Clara's behaviour was so painful to me still, that I recoiled from any talk about it—the more that Charley had a kind and good opinion of her, and would I knew only start objections and explanations defensive, as he had done before on a similar occasion, and this I should have no patience with. I had therefore hitherto held my tongue. There was, of course, likewise the fear of betraying his sister, only the danger of that was small, now that the communication between the two girls seemed at an end for the time; and if it had not been that a certain amount of mutual reticence had arisen between us, first on Charley's part and afterwards on mine, I doubt much whether, after all, I should not by this time have told him the whole story. But the moment I had spoken as above, the strangeness of his look, which seemed to indicate that he would gladly request me to explain myself but for some hidden reason, flashed upon me the suspicion that he was himself in love with Clara. The moment the suspicion entered, a host of circumstances crystallized around it. Fact after fact flashed out of my memory, from the first meeting of the two in Switzerland down to this last time I had seen them together, and in the same moment I was convinced that the lady I saw him with in the Regent's Park was no other than Clara. But if it were so, why had he shut me out from his confidence? Of the possible reasons which suggested themselves, the only one which approached the satisfactory was, that he had dreaded hurting me by the confession of his love for her, and preferred leaving it to Clara to cure me of a passion to which my doubtful opinion of her gave a probability of weakness and ultimate evanescence.

A great conflict awoke in me. What ought I to do? How could I leave him in ignorance of the falsehood of the woman he loved? But I could not make the disclosure now. I must think about the how and the how much to tell him. I returned to the subject which had led up to the discovery.

“Does your father keep horses, Charley?”

“He has a horse for his parish work, and my mother has an old pony for her carriage.”

“Is the rectory a nice place?”

“I believe it is, but I have such painful associations with it, that I hardly know.”

The Arab loves the desert sand where he was born; the thief loves the court where he used to play in the gutter. How miserable Charley's childhood must have been! How *could* I tell him of Clara's falsehood?

"Why doesn't he give Mary a pony to ride?" I asked. "But I suppose he hasn't room for another."

"Oh yes, there's plenty of room. His predecessor was rather a big fellow. In fact, the stables are on much too large a scale for a clergyman. I daresay he never thought of it. I must do my father the justice to say there's nothing stingy about him, and I believe he loves my sister even more than my mother. It certainly would be the best thing he could do for her to give her a pony. But she will die of religion—young, and be sainted in a twopenny tract, and that is better than a pony. Her hair doesn't curl—that's the only objection. Some one has remarked that all the good children who die have curly hair."

Poor Charley! Was his mind more healthy then? Was he less likely to come to an early death? Was his want of faith more life-giving than what he considered her false faith?

"I see no reason to fear it," I said, with a tremor at my heart as I thought of my dream.

That night I was sleepless—but about Charley—not about Mary. What could I do?—what ought I to do? Might there be some mistake in my judgment of Clara? I searched, and I believe searched honestly, for any possible mode of accounting for her conduct that might save her uprightness, or mitigate the severity of the condemnation I had passed upon her. I could find none. At the same time, what I was really seeking was an excuse for saying nothing to Charley. I suspect now that had I searched after justification or excuse for her from love to herself, I might have succeeded in constructing a theory capable of sheltering her; but as it was, I failed utterly; and turning at last from the effort, I brooded instead upon the Quixotic idea already adverted to, grown the more attractive as offering a good excuse for leaving Charley for a little.

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## CHAPTER LII.

### LILITH MEETS WITH A MISFORTUNE.

THE next day, leaving a note to inform Charley that I had run home for a week, I set out for the moat, carrying with me the best side-saddle I could find in London.

As I left the inn at Minstercombe in a gig, I saw Clara coming out of a shop. I could not stop and speak to her, for, not to mention the opinion I had of her, and the treachery of which I accused her, was I not at that very moment meditating how best to let her lover know that she was not to be depended upon? I touched the horse with the whip, and drove rapidly past. Involuntarily, however, I glanced behind, and saw a white face staring after me. Our looks encountering thus, I lifted my hat, but held on my course.



I could not help feeling very sorry for her. The more falsely she had behaved, she was the more to be pitied. She looked very beautiful with that white face. But how different was her beauty from that of my Athanasia !

Having tried the side-saddle upon Lilith, and found all it wanted was a little change in the stuffing about the withers, I told Styles to take it and the mare to Minstercombe the next morning, and have it properly fitted.

What trifles I am lingering upon ! Lilith is gone to the worms—no, that I *do not* believe : amongst the things most people believe, and I cannot, that is one ; but at all events she is dead, and the saddle gone to worms ; and yet, for reasons which will want no explanation to my one reader, I care to linger even on the fringes of this part of the web of my story.

I wandered about the field and house, building and demolishing many an airy abode, until Styles came back. I had told him to get the job done at once, and not return without the saddle.

“Can I trust you, Styles ?” I said abruptly.

“I hope so, sir. If I may make so bold, I don’t think I was altogether to blame about that book——”

“Of course not. I told you so. Never think of it again. Can you keep a secret ?”

“I can try, sir. You’ve been a good master to me, I’m sure, sir.”

“That I mean to be still, if I can. Do you know the parish of Spurdene ?”

“I was born there, sir.”

“Ah ! that’s not so convenient. Do you know the rectory ?”

“Every stone of it, I may say, sir.”

“And do they know you ?”

“Well, it’s some years since I left—a mere boy, sir.”

“I want you then—if it be possible—you can tell best—to set out with Lilith to-morrow night—I hope it will be a warm night. You must groom her thoroughly, put on the side saddle and her new bridle, and lead her—you’re not to ride her, mind—I don’t want her to get hot—lead her to the rectory of Spurdene—and—now here is the point—if it be possible, take her up to the stable, and fasten her by this silver chain to the ring at the door of it—as near morning as you safely can to avoid discovery, for she mustn’t stand longer at this season of the year than can be helped. I will tell you all.—I mean her for a present to Miss Osborne ; but I do not want anyone to know where she comes from. None of them, I believe, have ever seen her. I will write something on a card, which you will fasten to one of the pommels, throwing over all this horse-cloth.”

I gave him a fine bear-skin I had bought for the purpose. He

smiled, and with evident enjoyment of the spirit of the thing, promised to do his best.

Lilith looked lovely as he set out with her, late the following night. When he returned the next morning, he reported that everything had succeeded admirably. He had carried out my instructions to the letter; and my white Lilith had by that time, I hoped, been caressed, possibly fed, by the hands of Mary Osborne herself.

I may just mention that on the card I had written—or rather printed the words: “To Mary Osborne, from a friend.”

In a day or two, I went back to London, but said nothing to Charley of what I had done—waiting to hear from him first what they said about it.

“I say, Wilfrid!” he cried, as he came into my room with his usual hurried step, the next morning but one, carrying an open letter in his hand, “what’s this you’ve been doing—you sly old fellow? You ought to have been a prince, by Jove!”

“What do you accuse me of? I must know that first, else I might confess to more than necessary. One must be on one’s guard with such as you.”

“Read that,” he said, putting the letter into my hand.

It was from his sister. One passage was as follows:

“A strange thing has happened. A few mornings ago, the loveliest white horse was found tied to the stable door, with a side-saddle, and a card on it directed to *me*. I went to look at the creature. It was like the witch-lady in Christabel, ‘beautiful exceedingly.’ I ran to my father, and told him. He asked me who had sent it, but I knew no more than he did. He said I couldn’t keep it unless we found out who had sent it, and probably not then, for the proceeding was as suspicious as absurd. To-day he has put an advertisement in the paper to the effect that if the animal is not claimed before, it will be sold at the horse-fair next week, and the money given to the new school fund. I feel as if I couldn’t bear parting with it, but of course I can’t accept a present without knowing where it comes from. Have you any idea who sent it? I am sure papa is right about it, as indeed, dear Charley, he always is.”

I laid down the letter, and, full of mortification, went walking about the room.

“Why didn’t you tell me, Wilfrid?”

“I thought it better, if you were questioned, that you should not know. But it was a foolish thing to do—very. I see it now. Of course your father is right. It doesn’t matter though. I will go down and buy her.”

“You had better not appear in it. Go to the Moat, and send Styles.”

“Yes—that will be best. Of course it will. When is the fair, do you know?”

"I will find out for you. I hope some rascal mayn't in the meantime take my father in, and persuade him to give her up. Why shouldn't I run down and tell him, and get back poor Lilith without making you pay for your own?"

"Indeed you shan't. The mare is your sister's, and I shall lay no claim to her. I have money enough to redeem her."

Charley got me information about the fair, and the day before it I set out for the Moat.

When I reached Minstercombe, having more time on my hands than I knew what to do with, I resolved to walk round by Spurdene. It would not be more than ten or twelve miles, and so I should get a peep of the rectory. On the way I met a few farmer-looking men on horseback, and just before entering the village, saw at a little distance a white creature—very like my Lilith—with a man on its back, coming towards me.

As they drew nearer, I was certain of the mare, and, thinking it possible the rider might be Mr. Osborne, withdrew into a thicket on the roadside. But what was my dismay to discover that it was indeed my Lilith, but ridden by Geoffrey Brotherton! As soon as he was past, I rushed into the village, and found that the people I had met were going from the fair. Charley had been misinformed. I was too late: Brotherton had bought my Lilith. Half distracted with rage and vexation, I walked on and on, never halting till I reached the Moat. Was this man destined to swallow up every thing I cared for? Had he suspected me as the foolish donor, and bought the mare to spite me? A thousand times rather would I have had her dead. Nothing on earth would have tempted me to sell my Lilith but inability to feed her, and then I would rather have shot her. I felt poorer than even when my precious folio was taken from me, for the lowest animal life is a greater thing than a rare edition. I did not go to bed at all that night, but sat by my fire or paced about the room till dawn, when I set out for Minstercombe, and reached it in time for the morning coach to London. The whole affair was a folly, and I said to myself that I deserved to suffer. Before I left, I told Styles, and begged him to keep an eye on the mare, and if ever he learned that her owner wanted to part with her, to come off at once and let me know. He was greatly concerned at my ill-luck, as he called it, and promised to watch her carefully. He knew one of the grooms, he said, a little, and would cultivate his acquaintance.

I could not help wishing now that Charley would let his sister know what I had tried to do for her, but of course I would not say so. I think he did tell her, but I never could be quite certain whether or not she knew it. I wonder if she ever suspected me. I think not. I have too good reason to fear that she attributed to another the would-be gift: I believe that from Brotherton's buying

her, they thought he had sent her—a present certainly far more befitting his means than mine. But I came to care very little about it, for my correspondence with her, through Charley, went on. I wondered sometimes how she could keep from letting her father know: that he did not know I was certain, for he would have put a stop to it at once. I conjectured that she had told her mother, and that she, fearing, to widen the breach between her husband and Charley, had advised her not to mention it to him; while, believing it would do both Charley and me good, she did not counsel her to give up the correspondence. It must be considered also that it was long before I said a word implying any personal interest. Before I ventured that, I had some ground for thinking that my ideas had begun to tell upon hers, for, even in her letters to Charley, she had begun to drop the common religious phrases, while all she said seemed to indicate a widening and deepening and simplifying of her faith. I do not for a moment imply that she had consciously given up one of the dogmas of the party to which she belonged, but there was the perceptible softening of growth in her utterances; and after that was plain to me, I began to let out my heart to her a little more.

About this time also I began to read once more the history of Jesus, asking myself as if on a first acquaintance with it, "Could it be—might it not be that, if there were a God, he would visit his children after some fashion? If so, is this a likely fashion? May it not even be the only right fashion?" In the story I found at least a perfection surpassing everything to be found elsewhere; and I was at least sure that whatever this man said must be true. If one could only be as sure of the record! But if ever a dawn was to rise upon me, here certainly the sky would break; here I thought I already saw the first tinge of the returning life-blood of the swooning world. The gathering of the waters of conviction at length one morning broke out in the following verses, which seemed more than half given to me, the only effort required being to fit them rightly together:—

Come to me, come to me, O my God;     ;  
Come to me everywhere!  
Let the trees mean thee, and the grassy sod,  
And the water and the air.

For thou art so far that I often doubt,  
As on every side I stare,  
Searching within, and looking without,  
If thou art anywhere.

How did men find thee in days of old?  
How did they grow so sure?  
They fought in thy name, they were glad and bold,  
They suffered, and kept themselves pure.

But now they say—neither above the sphere.  
Nor down in the heart of man,

But only in fancy, ambition, or fear,  
The thought of thee began.

If only that perfect tale were true  
Which with touch of sunny gold,  
Of the ancient many makes one anew,  
And simplicity manifold.

But *he* said that they who did his word,  
The truth of it should know :  
I will try to do it—if he be Lord,  
Perhaps the old spring will flow ;

Perhaps the old spirit-wind will blow  
That he promised to their prayer ;  
And doing thy will, I yet shall know  
Thee, Father, everywhere !

These lines found their way without my concurrence into a certain religious magazine, and I was considerably astonished, and yet more pleased one evening when Charley handed me, with the kind regards of his sister, my own lines, copied by herself. I speedily let her know they were mine, explaining that they had found their way into print without my cognizance. She testified so much pleasure at the fact, and the little scraps I could claim as my peculiar share of the contents of Charley's envelopes, grew so much more confiding, that I soon ventured to write more warmly than hitherto. A period longer than usual passed before she wrote again, and when she did she took no express notice of my last letter. Foolishly or not, I regarded this as a favourable sign, and wrote several letters, in which I allowed the true state of my feelings towards her to appear. At length I wrote a long letter in which without a word of direct love-making, I thought yet to reveal that I loved her with all my heart. It was chiefly occupied with my dream on that memorable night—of course without the slightest allusion to the waking, or anything that followed. I ended abruptly, telling her that the dream often recurred, but as often as it drew to its lovely close, the lifted veil of Athanasia revealed ever and only the countenance of Mary Osborne.

The answer to this came soon, and in few words.

"I dare not take to myself what you write. That would be presumption indeed, not to say wilful self-deception. It will be honour enough for me if in any way I serve to remind you of the lady of your dream. Wilfrid, if you love me, take care of my Charley. I must not write more.—M. O."

It was not much, but enough to make me happy. I write it from memory—every word as it lies where any moment I could read it—shut in a golden coffin whose lid I dare not open.

## CHAPTER LIII.

## TOO LATE.

I MUST now go back a little. After my suspicions had been aroused as to the state of Charley's feelings, I hesitated for a long time before I finally made up my mind to tell him the part Clara had had in the loss of my sword. But while I was thus restrained by dread of the effect the disclosure would have upon him if my suspicions were correct, those very suspicions formed the strongest reason for acquainting him with her duplicity; and, although I was always too ready to put off the evil day so long as doubt supplied excuse for procrastination, I could not have let so much time slip by and nothing said, but for my absorption in Mary.

At length, however, I had now resolved, and one evening, as we sat together, I took my pipe from my mouth, and, shivering bodily, thus began:

"Charley," I said, "I have had for a good while something on my mind, which I cannot keep from you longer."

He looked alarmed instantly. I went on.

"I have not been quite open with you about that affair of the sword."

He looked yet more dismayed; but I must go on, though it tore my very heart. When I came to the point of my overhearing Clara talking to Brotherton, he started up, and without waiting to know the subject of their conversation, came close up to me, and, his face distorted with the effort to keep himself quiet, said, in a voice hollow and still and far off, like what one fancies of the voice of the dead,

"Wilfrid, you said Brotherton, I think?"

"I did, Charley."

"She never told me that!"

"How could she when she was betraying your friend?"

"No, no!" he cried, with a strange mixture of command and entreaty; "don't say that. There is some explanation. There *must* be."

"She told *me* she hated him," I said.

"I *know* she hates him. What was she saying to him?"

"I tell you she was betraying me, your friend, who had never done her any wrong, to the man she had told me she hated, and whom I had heard her ridicule."

"What do you mean by betraying you?"

I recounted what I had overheard. He listened with clenched teeth and trembling white lips; then burst into a forced laugh.

"What a fool I am! Distrust *her*! I will *not*. There is some explanation! There *must* be!"

The dew of agony lay thick on his forehead. I was greatly alarmed at what I had done, but I could not blame myself.

"Do be calm, Charley," I entreated.

"I am as calm as death," he replied, striding up and down the room with long strides.

He stopped and came up to me again.

"Wilfrid," he said, "I am a damned fool. I am going now. Don't be frightened—I am perfectly calm. I will come and explain it all to you to-morrow—no—the next day—or the next at latest. She had some reason for hiding it from me, but I shall have it all the moment I ask her. She is not what you think her. I don't for a moment blame you—but—are you sure it was—Clara's—voice you heard?" he added with forced calmness and slow utterance.

"A man is not likely to mistake the voice of a woman he ever fancied himself in love with."

"Don't talk like that, Wilfrid. You'll drive me mad. How should *she* know you had taken the sword?"

"She was always urging me to take it. There lies the main sting of the treachery. But I never told you where I found the sword."

"What can that have to do with it?"

"I found it on my bed that same morning when I woke. It could not have been there when I lay down."

"Well?"

"Charley, I believe *she* laid it there."

He leaped at me like a tiger. Startled, I jumped to my feet. He laid hold of me by the throat, and griped me with a quivering grasp. Recovering my self-possession I stood perfectly still, making no effort even to remove his hand, although it was all but choking me. In a moment or two, he relaxed his hold, burst into tears, took up his hat, and walked to the door.

"Charley! Charley! you must *not* leave me so," I cried, starting forwards.

"To-morrow, Wilfrid; to-morrow," he said, and was gone.

He was back before I could think what to do next. Opening the door half way, he said—as if a griping hand had been on *his* throat—

"I—I—I—don't believe it, Wilfrid. You only said you believed it. I don't. Good night. I'm all right now. *Mind, I don't believe it.*"

He shut the door. Why did I not follow him? But if I had followed him, what could I have said or done? In every man's life come awful moments when he must meet his fate—dree his weird—alone. Alone, I say, if he have no God—for man or woman cannot aid him, cannot touch him, cannot come near him. Charley was now in one of those crises, and I could not help him. Death is counted an awful thing: it seems to me that life is an infinitely more awful thing.

In the morning I received the following letter.

"DEAR MR. CUMBERMEDE,

"You will be surprised at receiving a note from me—still more at its contents. I am most anxious to see you—so much so that I venture to ask you to meet me where we can have a little quiet talk. I am in London, and for a day or two sufficiently my own mistress to leave the choice of time and place with you—only let it be when and where we shall not be interrupted. I presume on old friendship in making this extraordinary request, but I do not presume in my confidence that you will not misunderstand my motives. One thing only I *beg*—that you will not inform C. O. of the petition I make.

"Your old friend,

"C. C."

What was I to do? To go, of course. She *might* have something to reveal which would cast light on her mysterious conduct. I cannot say I expected a disclosure capable of removing Charley's misery, but I did vaguely hope to learn something that might alleviate it. Anyhow, I would meet her, for I dared not refuse to hear her. To her request of concealing it from Charley, I would grant nothing beyond giving it quarter until I should see whither the affair tended. I wrote at once—making an appointment for the same evening. But was it from a suggestion of Satan, from an evil impulse of human spite, or by the decree of fate, that I fixed on that part of the Regent's Park in which I had seen him and the lady I now believed to have been Clara walking together in the dusk? I cannot now tell. The events which followed have destroyed all certainty, but I fear it was a flutter of the wings of revenge, a shove at the spokes of the wheel of time to hasten the coming of its circle.

Anxious to keep out of Charley's way—for the secret would make me wretched in his presence—I went into the City, and, after an early dinner, sauntered out to the Zoological Gardens, to spend the time till the hour of meeting. But there, strange to say, whether from insight or fancy, in every animal face I saw such gleams of a troubled humanity, that at last I could bear it no longer, and betook myself to Primrose Hill.

It was a bright afternoon, wonderfully clear, with a crisp frosty feel in the air. But the sun went down, and, one by one, here and there, above and below, the lights came out and the stars appeared, until at length sky and earth were full of flaming spots, and it was time to seek our rendezvous.

I had hardly reached it, when the graceful form of Clara glided towards me. She perceived in a moment that I did not mean to shake hands with her. It was not so dark but that I saw her bosom heave, and a flush overspread her countenance.



"You wished to see me, Miss Coningham," I said. "I am at your service."

"What is wrong, Mr. Cumberland? You never used to speak to me in such a tone."

"There is nothing wrong if you are not more able than I to tell what it is."

"Why did you come if you were going to treat me so?"

"Because you requested it."

"Have I offended you then by asking you to meet me? I trusted you. I thought *you* would never misjudge me."

"I should be but too happy to find I had been unjust to you, Miss Coningham. I would gladly go on my knees to you to confess that fault, if I could only be satisfied of its existence. Assure me of it, and I will bless you."

"How strangely you talk? Some one has been maligning me."

"No one. But I have come to the knowledge of what only one besides yourself could have told me."

"You mean——"

"Geoffrey Brotherton."

"*He!* He has been telling you——"

"No—thank heaven! I have not yet sunk to the slightest communication with *him*."

She turned her face aside. Veiled as it was by the gathering gloom she yet could not keep it towards me. But after a brief pause she looked at me and said,

"You know more than—I do not know what you mean."

"I do know more than you think I know. I will tell you under what circumstances I came to such knowledge."

She stood motionless.

"One evening," I went on, "after leaving Moldwarp Hall with Charles Osborne, I returned to the library to fetch a book. As I entered the room where it lay I heard voices in the armoury. One was the voice of Geoffrey Brotherton—a man you told me you hated. The other was yours."

She drew herself up, and stood stately before me.

"Is that your accusation?" she said. "Is a woman never to speak to a man because she detests him?"

She laughed I thought drearily.

"Apparently not—for then I presume you would not have asked me to meet you."

"Why should you think I hate *you*?"

"Because you have been treacherous to me."

"In talking to Geoffrey Brotherton? I do hate him. I hate him more than ever. I spoke the truth when I told you that."

"Then you do not hate me?"

"No."

"And yet you delivered me over to my enemy bound hand and foot, as Delilah did Samson.—I heard what you said to Brotherton."

She seemed to waver, but stood—speechless, as if waiting for more.

"I heard you tell him that I had taken that sword—the sword you had always been urging me to take—the sword you unsheathed and laid on my bed that I might be tempted to take it—why I cannot understand, for I never did you a wrong to my poor knowledge. I fell into your snare, and you made use of the fact you had achieved to ruin my character, and drive me from the house in which I was foolish enough to regard myself as conferring favours rather than receiving them. You have caused me to be branded as a thief for taking—at your suggestion—that which was and still is my own!"

"Does Charley know this?" she asked, in a strangely altered voice.

"He does. He learned it yesterday."

"O my God!" she cried, and fell kneeling on the grass at my feet. "Wilfrid! Wilfrid! I will tell you all. It was to tell you all about this very thing that I asked you to come. I could not bear it longer. Only your tone made me angry. I did not know you knew so much."

The very fancy of such submission from such a creature would have thrilled me with a wild compassion once; but now I thought of Charley and felt cold to her sorrow as well as her loveliness. When she lifted her eyes to mine, however—it was not so dark but I could see their sadness—I began to hope a little for my friend. I took her hand and raised her. She was now weeping with down-bent head.

"Clara, you shall tell me all. God forbid I should be hard upon you. But you know I cannot understand it. I have no clue to it. How could you serve me so?"

"It is very hard for me—but there is no help now: I must confess disgrace, in order to escape infamy. Listen to me then—as kindly as you can, Wilfrid. I beg your pardon; I have no right to use any old familiarity with you. Had my father's plans succeeded, I should still have had to make an apology to you, but under what different circumstances! I will be as brief as I can. My father believed you the rightful heir to Moldwarp Hall. Your own father believed it, and made my father believe it—that was in case your uncle should leave no heir behind him. But your uncle was a strange man, and would neither lay claim to the property himself, nor allow you to be told of your prospects. He did all he could to make you like himself, indifferent to worldly things; and my father feared you would pride yourself on refusing to claim your rights except some counter-influence were used."

"But why should your father have taken any trouble in the matter?" I asked.

"Well, you know—one in his profession likes to see justice done; and, besides, to conduct such a case must of course be of professional advantage to him. You must not think him under obligation to the present family: my grandfather held the position he still occupies before they came into the property.—I am too unhappy to mind what I say now. My father was pleased when you and I—indeed I fancy he had a hand in our first meeting. But while your uncle lived, he had to be cautious. Chance, however, seemed to avour his wishes. We met more than once, and you liked me, and my father thought I might wake you up to care about your rights, and—and—but—"

"I see. And it might have been, Clara, but for—"

"Only, you see, Mr. Cumbermede," she interrupted with a half-smile, and a little return of her playful manner—"I didn't wish it."

"No. You preferred the man who *had* the property."

It was a speech both cruel and rude. She stepped a pace back, and looked me proudly in the face.

"Prefer that man to *you*, Wilfrid! No. I could never have fallen so low as that. But I confess I didn't mind letting papa understand that Mr. Brotherton was polite to me—just to keep him from urging me to—to— You *will* do me the justice that I did not try to make you—to make you—care for me, Wilfrid?"

"I admit it heartily. I will be as honest as you, and confess that you might have done so—easily enough at one time. Indeed I am only half-honest after all: I loved you once—after a boyish fashion."

She half-smiled again.

"I am glad you are believing me now," she said.

"Thoroughly," I answered. "When you speak the truth, I must believe you."

"I was afraid to let papa know the real state of things. I was always afraid of him, though I love him dearly, and he is very good to me. I dared not disappoint him by telling him that I loved Charley Osborne. That time—you remember—when we met in Switzerland, his strange ways interested me so much! I was only a girl—but—"

"I understand well enough. I don't wonder at any woman falling in love with my Charley."

"Thank you," she said, with a sigh which seemed to come from the bottom of her heart. "You were always generous. You will do what you can to right me with Charley—won't you? He is very strange sometimes."

"I will indeed. But, Clara, why didn't Charley let *me* know that you and he loved each other?"

"Ah! there my shame comes in again! I wanted—for my father's

sake, not for my own—I need not tell you that—I wanted to keep my influence over you a little while—that is until I could gain my father's end. If I should succeed in rousing you to enter an action for the recovery of your rights, I thought my father might then be reconciled to my marrying Charley instead——”

“Instead of me, Clara. Yes—I see. I begin to understand the whole thing. It's not so bad as I thought—not by any means.”

“Oh, Wilfrid! how good of you! I shall love you next to Charley all my life.”

She caught hold of my hand, and for a moment seemed on the point of raising it to her lips.

“But I can't easily get over the disgrace you have done me, Clara. Neither, I confess, can I get over your degrading yourself to a private interview with such a beast as I know—and can't help suspecting you knew Brotherton to be.”

She dropped my hand, and hid her face in both her own.

“I did know what he was; but the thought of Charley made me able to go through with it.”

“With the sacrifice of his friend to his enemy?”

“It was bad. It was horridly wicked. I hate myself for it. But you know I thought it would do you no harm in the end.”

“How much did Charley know of it all?” I asked.

“Nothing whatever. How could I trust his innocence? He's the simplest creature in the world, Wilfrid.”

“I know that well enough.”

“I could not confess one atom of it to him. He would have blown up the whole scheme at once. It was all I could do to keep him from telling you of our engagement; and that made him miserable.”

“Did you tell him I was in love with you? You knew I was, well enough.”

“I dared not do that,” she said, with a sad smile. “He would have vanished—would have killed himself to make way for you.”

“I see you understand him, Clara.”

“That will give me some feeble merit in your eyes—won't it, Wilfrid?”

“Still I don't see quite why you betrayed me to Brotherton. I daresay I should if I had time to think it over.”

“I wanted to put you in such a position with regard to the Brothertons that you could have no scruples in respect of them such as my father feared from what he called the over-refinement of your ideas of honour. The treatment you must receive would, I thought, rouse every feeling against them. But it was not *all* for my father's sake, Wilfrid. It was, however mistaken, yet a good deal for the sake of Charley's friend that I thus disgraced myself. Can you believe me?”

"I do. But nothing can wipe out the disgrace to me."

"The sword was your own. Of course I never for a moment doubted that."

"But they believed I was lying."

"I can't persuade myself it signifies greatly what such people think about you. I except Sir Giles. The rest are——"

"Yet you consented to visit them."

"I was in reality Sir Giles's guest. Not one of the others would have asked me."

"Not Geoffrey?"

"I owe *him* nothing but undying revenge for Charley."

Her eyes flashed through the darkness, and she looked as if she could have killed him.

"But you were plotting against Sir Giles all the time you were his guest?"

"Not unjustly though. The property was not his, but yours—that is, as we then believed. As far as I knew, the result would have been a real service to him, in delivering him from unjust possession—a thing he would himself have scorned. It was all very wrong—very low, if you like—but somehow it then seemed simple enough—a lawful stratagem for the right."

"Your heart was so full of Charley!"

"Then you do forgive me, Wilfrid?"

"With all my soul. I hardly feel now as if I had anything to forgive."

I drew her towards me and kissed her on the forehead. She threw her arms round me, and clung to me, sobbing like a child.

"You will explain it all to Charley—won't you?" she said, as soon as she could speak, withdrawing herself from the arm which had involuntarily crept around her, seeking to comfort her.

"I will," I said.

We were startled by a sound in the clump of trees behind us. Then over their tops passed a wailful gust of wind, through which we thought came the fall of receding footsteps.

"I hope we haven't been overheard," I said. "I shall go at once and tell Charley all about it. I will just see you home first."

"There's no occasion for that, Wilfrid; and I'm sure I don't deserve it."

"You deserve a thousand thanks. You have lifted a mountain off me. I see it all now. When your father found it was no use——"

"Then I saw I had wronged you, and I couldn't bear myself till I had confessed all."

"Your father is satisfied then that the register would not stand in evidence?"

"Yes. He told me all about it."

"He has never said a word to me on the matter ; but just dropped me in the dirt, and let me lie there."

"You must forgive him too, Wilfrid. It was a dreadful blow to him, and it was weeks before he told me. We couldn't think what was the matter with him. You see he had been cherishing the scheme ever since your father's death, and it was a great humiliation to find he had been sitting so many years on an addled egg," she said, with a laugh in which her natural merriment once more peeped out.

I walked home with her, and we parted like old friends.

On my way to the Temple, I was anxiously occupied as to how Charley would receive the explanation I had to give him. That Clara's confession would be a relief I could not doubt ; but it must cause him great pain notwithstanding. His sense of honour was so keen, and his ideal of womankind so lofty, that I could not but dread the consequences of the revelation. At the same time I saw how it might benefit him. I had begun to see that it is more divine to love the erring than to love the good, and to understand how there is more joy over the one than over the ninety and nine. If Charley, understanding that he is no divine lover who loves only so long as he is able to flatter himself that the object of his love is immaculate, should find that he must love Clara in spite of her faults and wrong-doings, he might thus grow to be less despairful over his own failures ; he might, through his love for Clara, learn to hope for himself, notwithstanding the awful distance at which perfection lay removed.

But as I went I was conscious of a strange oppression. It was not properly mental, for my interview with Clara had raised my spirits. It was a kind of physical oppression I felt, as if the air, which was in reality clear and cold, had been damp and close and heavy.

I went straight to Charley's chambers. The moment I opened the door, I knew that something was awfully wrong. The room was dark—but he would often sit in the dark. I called him, but received no answer. Trembling, I struck a light, for I feared to move lest I should touch something dreadful. But when I had succeeded in lighting the lamp, I found the room just as it always was. His hat was on the table. He must be in his bedroom. And yet I did not feel as if anything alive was near me. Why was everything so frightfully still ? I opened the door as slowly and fearfully as if I had dreaded arousing a sufferer whose life depended on his repose. There he lay on his bed, in his clothes—fast asleep, as I thought, for he often slept so, and at any hour of the day—the natural relief of his much-perturbed mind. His eyes were closed, and his face was very white. As I looked, I heard a sound—a drop—another ! There was a slow drip somewhere. God in heaven ! Could it be ? I rushed to him, calling him aloud. There was no response. It was too true ! He was dead. The long snake-like Indian dagger was in his heart, and the blood was oozing slowly from around it.

I dare not linger over that horrible night, or the horrible days that followed. Such days! such nights! The letters to write!—The friends to tell!—Clara!—His father!—The police!—The inquest!

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Mr. Osborne took no notice of my letter, but came up at once. Entering where I sat with my head on my arms on the table, the first announcement I had of his presence was a hoarse deep broken voice ordering me out of the room. I obeyed mechanically, took up Charley's hat instead of my own, and walked away with it. But the neighbours were kind, and although I did not attempt to approach again all that was left of my friend, I watched from a neighbouring window, and following at a little distance, was present when they laid his form, late at night, in the unconsecrated ground of a cemetery.

I may just mention here what I had not the heart to dwell upon in the course of my narrative—that since the talk about suicide occasioned by the remarks of Sir Thomas Browne, he had often brought up the subject—chiefly however in a half-humorous tone, and from what may be called an æsthetic point of view as to the best mode of accomplishing it. For some of the usual modes he expressed abhorrence, as being so ugly; and on the whole considered—I well remember the phrase, for he used it more than once—that a dagger—and on one of those occasions he took up the Indian weapon already described and said—“such as this now,”—was “the most gentleman-like usher into the presence of the Great Nothing.” As I had however often heard that those who contemplated suicide never spoke of it, and as his manner on the occasions to which I refer was always merry, such talk awoke little uneasiness; and I believe that he never had at the moment any conscious attraction to the subject stronger than a speculative one. At the same time, however, I believe that the speculative attraction itself had its roots in the misery with which in other and prevailing moods he was so familiar.

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## [ CHAPTER LIV.

### ISOLATION.

AFTER writing to Mr. Osborne to acquaint him with the terrible event, the first thing I did was to go to Clara. I will not attempt to describe what followed. The moment she saw me, her face revealed, as in a mirror, the fact legible on my own, and I had scarcely opened my mouth when she cried “He is dead!” and fell fainting on the floor. Her aunt came, and we succeeded in recovering her a little. But she lay still as death on the couch where we had laid her, and the motion of her eyes hither and thither as if following the movements of some one about the room was the only sign of life in

her. We spoke to her, but evidently she heard nothing; and at last, leaving her when the doctor arrived, I waited for her aunt in another room, and told her what had happened.

Some days after, Clara sent for me, and I had to tell her the whole story. Then, with agony in every word she uttered, she managed to inform me that when she went in after I left her at the door that night, she found waiting her a note from Charley; and this she now gave me to read. It contained a request to meet him that evening at the very place which I had appointed. It was their customary rendezvous when she was in town. In all probability he was there when we were, and heard and saw—heard too little and saw too much, and concluded that both Clara and I were false to him. The frightful perturbation which a conviction such as that must cause in a mind like his could be nothing short of madness. For, ever tortured by a sense of his own impotence, of the gulf to all appearance eternally fixed between his actions and his aspirations, and unable to lay hold of the Essential, the Causing Goodness, he had clung with the despair of a perishing man to the dim reflex of good he saw in her and me. If his faith in that was indeed destroyed, the last barrier must have given way, and the sea of madness ever breaking against it, must have broken in and overwhelmed him. But, O my friend! surely long ere now thou knowest that we were not false; surely the hour will yet dawn when I shall again hold thee to my heart; yea, surely, even if still thou countest me guilty, thou hast already found for me endless excuse and forgiveness.

I can hardly doubt however that he inherited a strain of madness from his father, a madness which that father had developed by forcing upon him the false forms of a true religion.

It is not then strange that I should have thought and speculated much about madness.—What does its frequent impulse to suicide indicate? May it not be its main instinct to destroy itself as an evil thing? May not the impulse arise from some unconscious conviction that there is for it no remedy but the shuffling off of this mortal coil—nature herself dimly urging through the fumes of the madness to the one blow which lets in the light and air? Doubtless, if in the mind so sadly unhinged, the sense of a holy Presence could be developed—the sense of a love that loves through all vagaries—of a hiding place from forms of evil the most fantastic—of a fatherly care that not merely holds its insane child in its arms, but enters into the chaos of his imagination, and sees every wildest horror with which it swarms; if, I say, the conviction of such a love dawned on the disordered mind, the man would live in spite of his imaginary foes, for he would pray against them as sure of being heard as St. Pau, when he prayed concerning the thorn from which he was not delivered, but against which he was sustained. And who can tell how often this may be the fact—how often the lunatic also lives by faith? Are



not the forms of madness most frequently those of love and religion? Certainly, if there be a God, he does not forget his frenzied offspring; certainly he is more tender over them than any mother over her idiot darling; certainly he sees in them what the eye of brother or sister cannot see. But some of them at least have not enough of such support to be able to go on living; and for my part, I confess I rejoice as often as I hear that one has succeeded in breaking his prison-bars. When the crystal shrine has grown dim, and the fair forms of nature are in their entrance contorted hideously; when the sunlight itself is as blue lightning, and the wind in the summer trees is as "a terrible sound of stones cast down, or a rebounding echo from the hollow mountains"; when the body is no longer a mediator between the soul and the world, but the prison-house of a lying gaoler and torturer—how can I but rejoice to hear that the tormented captive has at length forced his way out into freedom?

When I look behind me, I can see but little through the surging lurid smoke of that awful time. The first sense of relief came when I saw the body of Charley laid in the holy earth. For the earth is the Lord's—and none the less holy that the voice of the priest may have left it without his consecration. Surely if ever the Lord laughs in derision, as the Psalmist says, it must be when the voice of a man would in *his* name exclude his fellows from their birthright. O Lord, gather thou the outcasts of thy Israel, whom the priests and the rulers of thy people have cast out to perish.

I remember for the most part only a dull agony, interchanging with apathy. For days and days I could not rest, but walked hither and thither, careless whither. When at length I would lie down weary and fall asleep, suddenly I would start up, hearing the voice of Charley crying for help, and rush in the middle of the winter night into the wretched streets, there to wander till daybreak. But I was not utterly miserable. In my most wretched dreams I never dreamed of Mary, and through all my waking distress I never forgot her. I was sure in my very soul that she did me no injustice. I had laid open the deepest in me to her honest gaze, and she had read it, and could not but know me. Neither did what had occurred quench my growing faith. I had never been able to hope much for Charley in this world; for something was out of joint with him, and only in the region of the unknown was I able to look for the setting right of it. Nor had many weeks passed before I was fully aware of relief when I remembered that he was dead. And whenever the thought arose that God might have given him a fairer chance in this world, I was able to reflect that apparently God does not care for this world save as a part of the whole; and on that whole I had yet to discover that he could have given him a fairer chance.

## MYTHS AND FAIRY TALES.

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THE great difficulty in the way of a scientific treatment of fairy lore and supernatural tradition lies in the abundance of materials of different kinds and co-ordinate authority at our command. The comparative mythologist may begin his studies at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of the chain of popular belief, and in either case, if he is disposed to treat the subject seriously, he will find nearly employment for a lifetime in clearing one portion of the ground for future speculation. The myth, the saga, and the fairy tale are undoubtedly related, and they stand in the scale of antiquity approximately in the order mentioned; but the descent of one from the other is by no means unbroken, and the common element running through them all, which is what makes them form branches of the same study, only reveals itself to those who are already thoroughly familiar with each in particular. Thus the earliest period of mythological growth with which we are acquainted is that presented by the Vedas and the Zend Avesta, works barely intelligible to scholars who study nothing else, whilst the comparative mythologist can only use them to profit on condition of possessing, in addition, a general knowledge of the earliest sacred books of other nations, and a more minute familiarity with the ethnological considerations which determine the age and degree of independence belonging to each. The normal or typical course of religious thought amongst the Aryan races, for instance, must be reconstructed before we can assign their right position in the scale of development to the mythology of Greece or Scandinavia; and this can scarcely be done without the help of comparisons derived from the mythology of more backward races, which again entails the inquiry what is religious and primitive, what legendary, and what fantastic in their individual beliefs. Thus one question leads to another, and the answers which would add most to our knowledge, and lead to the most fruitful results, are the last which we can arrive at with any degree of confidence.

The saga, or heroic legend, standing midway between the myth, which vanishes into the shades of the past, and the fairy tale, which loses itself in the frivolity of the present, is also perforce a study apart: in the first place, because of the exceeding voluminousness of its literature—Iliad, Shah Nameh, Nibelungen Lied, Chant de Roland—all the works of what may be called *applied* mythology, produced in the inevitable chivalrous Middle Age of each nation; and

secondly, because each separate legendary cycle has to be submitted to historical criticism, to see that no crumbs of fact are inadvertently left amongst the residuum destined to pass into the mythologic crucible. The epic or ballad literature which has grown up around the names of Rama, Rustem, Sigurd and Siegfried, Charlemagne, Arthur, Diarmid and Fionn, or the Cid, must all be taken into account for the secondary period of mythological development; and in some ways, perhaps, this branch of comparative mythology may be looked upon as the most advanced. Even here, however, it would take the heroic industry of a Grimm to catalogue the substantial results arrived at by all who have laboured independently in this field, which is certainly far too wide to be entered upon in a magazine article; especially as these heroic legends, just because we seem to know most about them, are of really less interest for the history of thought than the obscure birth of natural religion or the despised utterances of its decrepitude.

We have no intention of entering into such wide questions as the origin of supernatural creeds, or the share which astronomical or metaphysical ideas, theological sentiments, and elemental experiences may have had in their formation. Without going below the surface of things, we find a mass of fiction common to almost the whole human race, and, therefore, we are compelled to suppose, based, in some inscrutable way, upon universal instincts and tendencies, which modern science must penetrate, or make a shameful confession of incompetence. But the task before the comparative mythologist is not so simple as some professors of the study seem to imagine. It would not be enough to have suggested an interpretation for one set of popular traditions, even though an exhaustive examination of the subject should make it apparent that every other form taken by myth or legend could ultimately be reduced to a derivative of the first. Comparative philology had only just begun when it was discovered that Sanskrit and Greek were kindred tongues, and that the type of modern European languages could be studied to best advantage in Hindustan. It remained to be shown, and the process is still in its earliest stages, how, and so far as possible, when and where, the languages which are now distinct branched off from each other, or from an older parent stem. The laws of linguistic change had to be ascertained, verified in those periods when the historian could check the conclusions of grammar, and then applied, with care and diffidence, to the remoter ages in which philology has no more trustworthy auxiliaries than geology or the other infant science now under discussion. Granting for a moment—what is doubtful—that all myths were originally solar or elemental, little has been gained until we are in possession of trustworthy data, showing by what laws the extant variations on the primitive theme were produced, and which ideas are peculiar to or characteristic of which nation or group of nations. The folk lore of one country at different periods, or of different

countries at the same period, ought to be compared, and instead of sinking all that is individual or characteristic in different legendary cycles, until Little Red Riding Hood and Achilles are the same person, a sound analysis would assign a separate place to every detail, however trifling, which was really primitive and irreducible. If materials were collected in this spirit, we should soon be able to assign as distinct a value to the fables told by any set of peasants as to the roots and numerals of their language, in fixing the affinities and history of their ancestors. In such matters guesses and *a priori* reasoning are worse than useless, because the appearance of complete knowledge discourages research; and, as Mr. Tylor admirably observes in his "Primitive Culture," after a very plausible "solar" interpretation of the "Song of Sixpence"—"Mere possibility in mythological speculation is now seen to be such a worthless commodity, that every investigator wishes there was not such plenty of it." What may mean anything is that much nearer meaning nothing; but as comparative mythology is really a science with a future, we have to discover, if possible, some "Grimm's law" which may serve to restrain the wanton exercise of explanatory ingenuity. Meanwhile it ought to be a fixed principle that no interpretation, however tempting, should be admitted to more than provisional toleration till some external evidence has been adduced in its support.

The author of "Mythology of the Aryan Nations" sometimes offends against this rule, at least to the extent of withholding the confirmatory proof which, perhaps, may be in his possession. One example will be enough of this tantalizing habit, common to most elementalists, of taking for granted without comment what would be very instructive indeed if only it were true. Everybody knows the story of the boy who wanted to learn to shiver, which, in the version given by Grimm, ends comically, with a maid-servant's pouring a pail of water from the brook, with all its slimy inmates, over him. According to Mr. Cox, the stupid boy "is no more able to shiver than the sun," and only learns "when Helios plunges into the sea as Endymion." Now, it would be rash to say that this catastrophe is *not* primitive, because the serious and the grotesque often mingle in these stories in a way that baffles calculation; but when we have to choose between Mr. Cox's supposition that the vivid sensible images of an elaborate allegory have been preserved for eight or ten centuries after its significance was lost, and the more obvious view, that some matter-of-fact German dame did not like a story without an ending, there are arguments on both sides which ought to be expressed. There is no doubt that fairy tales are occasionally distorted by wanton, that is, meaningless inventions; and the Germans have been a reading people so long that the value of oral tradition is less with them than in almost any other country. Still, the intrusive elements can generally be detected by a comparison of the dominant idea,

which constitutes the core and centre of the myth, with the co-ordinate forms taken by it in different countries. Now in Grimm's story there are, as it were, two *motives*—the humorous notion of a person wishing to acquire by art a power which those who possess it would gladly dispense with, and a cluster of adventures typical of absolute fearlessness. Too much importance must not be attached to the word "gruseln," which is by no means essential to the story, for in many versions the youth sets forth "das Fürchte-mich zu lernen," because he so often hears people say, "I'm afraid," and does not know what they mean. Of course the sun may be conceived as fearless as well as hot, but the story in its most complete shape is met with in comparatively few of the excellent collections of popular tales which have been made of late years in all parts of Europe; and the nearest parallel to the ending, on which Mr. Cox builds so much, is that offered by stories of a very different type, where the princess, who has been enamoured of a wicked magician, is disenchanted when her husband has plunged her thrice into a tub of water, from which she rises the first time as a raven, the second time as a dove, and at last in her proper shape. Of course this may be taken as a story of solar infidelity with the sexes reversed, but we may just as well suppose a reference to the rite of baptism, for the tub of water in Andersen and a German version from the Hartz district, is wanting in old Eastern forms of the tale.

We find the story at full in Sicily in the fairy tales collected from oral tradition by Fraülein Gonzenbach, where the hero is chiefly remarkable for not being afraid of churchyards and corpses, while the tone of the story seems to imply that such extreme don't-care-ishness is almost irreligious. Grimm knows of no modern French equivalent; but the legend had taken this turn in the romances about Richard sans Peur, current as late as the seventeenth century, and certainly as early as the thirteenth. Here it is the devils who are piqued by Richard's reputation for fearlessness, and try in a variety of ways to take him unawares. One evil spirit assumes the shape of a baby, which Richard finds in a wood, and grows up into a girl on purpose that it may marry him, pretend to die, and frighten him as he is watching by the corpse. Brudemort (so the sprite is called) is disappointed in this deep-laid plot, and after several other failures, the powers of darkness abandon their attempts, and Richard and his ex-spouse remain the best of friends. We may observe, parenthetically, that the episode of a corpse which rises, vampire-like, to devour the watchers, is found again in some recently published Venetian fairy tales, and no doubt belongs to a time when the duty of watching by the dead was held to be both necessary, as, according to Apuleius, in Thessaly, and dangerous, as when all these tests of courage were invented. The story was once known in Tyrol, as Zingerle, who professes to follow his authorities literally, speaks in a short tale

called "Die weisse Geis" of a poacher, "der das Fürchten nicht gelernt hatte," but the incidents are generally vulgarised into mere ghost stories, with a local habitation, in which, moreover, the dreadnought adventurer gets the worst of it at the hands of the spirits. We may perhaps also connect the Lithuanian story of a wager between the devil, Perkunas (the Lithuanian god), and a carpenter, as to which should succeed in frightening the other two, but the details are dissimilar. In Campbell's "Tales of the Western Highlands," we have the adventures of the fearless hero, but without the previously expressed wish to learn what fear is, and joined to another group of stories by the hero's triumph over the devil, here called the Mischief, who is decoyed into a bag and belaboured by threshers and blacksmiths. Some of the same incidents are met with in Arnason's "Icelandic Tales," and faint reminiscences may be recognised in Chambers's "Nursery Rhymes of Scotland." But, on the whole, it seems as if the "learning to shiver" was not the popular part of the legend, and there is certainly a refinement about the idea which may account for its dropping out of the common fireside version. In China, however, we find it again stripped of all irrelevant incidents: a king (in Stanislas Julien's "Avadanass") has heard of Misfortune, and wishes to know what she is like; he offers one hundred thousand pieces of gold for the privilege of making her acquaintance, and in return she ravages his country and reduces him to misery. Here the moral is obvious; but the germ of the apologue must have been a popular saying or anecdote, like the legendary basis of the stories in the "Gesta Romanorum," a work to which the "Avadanass" bear the strongest resemblance, in the perverse ingenuity with which they extract sweetness from the strong, and edification from the most unpromising myths. But to return to Grimm and Mr. Cox: the conclusion of the bucket of cold water is by no means general in the stories which resemble each other in their remaining features. If the myth is to be solar, the version to be preferred is certainly one in which the princess pushes her unreasonable bridegroom off a bridge into the water; but the number, as well as the character of the different variations, seems rather to point to falsification or invention. Of all the attempts to manufacture an end for a story which, to our thinking, requires none, the worst is certainly one of Grimm's variants, which makes the hero take fright at the firing of a cannon; and perhaps the best a northern version, in which his head is cut off, and then put on hind part before, an operation which might easily upset the strongest nerves. It would be tedious to follow out the analysis of the different proofs of courage given in all these stories, though a strictly scientific treatment demands that we should distinguish them into three groups, according as they are most akin to the common heroic type of exploit, to the prudent wit of the valiant tailor, or to the humorous and sometimes malignant

blundering of the popular fool. We have said enough to show that the solar character of any part of the legend remains to be established, and that the weight of presumption is decidedly against such a character for the whole of its late German form.

The study of these fragmentary remains of what was once mythology may follow either of two directions without falling into the snare of over hasty generalisations. Contemporary fairy tales, in other words, may be investigated either *secundum esse* or *secundum fieri*, critically, in connection with their natural sense, and logical antecedents, by the analysis of their actual elements, or historically in relation to their date, origin, and present external form. The only serious attempt, so far as we are aware, which has been made in the first of these directions, is due to Johann Georg von Hahn, who has endeavoured to classify the modern Greek and Albanian fairy tales collected by himself. The principal fault to be found with his arrangement is that he seems to have been guided rather too much by such accidental features as the relationship of the characters, or the presence of particular incidents which are not an essential part of the framework of the story. It would be ungrateful to complain, when he has made so promising a beginning, that he has not gone further and tried to group together those stories which were originally akin in meaning as well as those which have a present resemblance; if this were done, the masses of fiction, in which three sons, and seven daughters, and twelve brothers, kings, princesses, quadrupeds, and strange carnivora are mixed together till the reader's brain turns giddy, might be reduced to a manageable number of types, each of which might then, if the needful learning and patience were forthcoming, be carried back to the idea which presided over its birth 4,000 years ago in central Asia, or longer ago still, when all the nameless nations of flint chippers had a common language and habitation.

The inquiry into the number and nature of the fixed mythical ideas which underlie the Protean forms of legendary fiction would carry us too far; it will be enough to suggest that the tenacity of popular memory for such things is, perhaps, assisted by the inarticulate, ideal conscience of the race; so that frivolous, or it may be immoral, narratives are tolerated for the higher meaning which, perhaps, they never knowingly had, and yet can never have been quite without, because its idea, in the Platonic sense, was existing all the time, and only awaiting recognition to become a reality. Behind the coarse and material language of early myths there hides not only the sentiment which this rather parodies than expresses, but all the consequences and developments which may follow from its nature as well. This is the true and primitive "possibility," the meaning which is not the less real for being latent and, as it were, optional. In interpreting the first and vaguest hints at future myths and legends,

it is especially desirable to remember this elasticity of early speculative thought, or we shall be apt to do injustice to the wisdom of our ancestors. At first sight the discrepancies between the most authoritative translations of some Vedic hymns seem hopelessly discouraging, but when several accomplished contemporaries are in doubt as to how they shall render an imaginative phrase, may we not suppose that its authors were content without defining and restricting too accurately that sense, out of many, which they assigned to it? We know how difficult it is to get a definition from children, and there is an intellectual period in which the word means the thing, the whole thing, nothing but the thing, and therewith an end, or rather a beginning, to all the dreams and discoveries of realism, since the nature of things is that which first shows man the infinite, and so leads him to shelter behind limitations.

Amongst so much that is doubtful, it is a comfort to be able to speak positively as to the first abstract idea which found literary expression in what the Avesta calls "the Aryan home." It was the idea of *Cow*. And as the myths derived from this fertile and comprehensive conception are comparatively simple and familiar, we cannot do better than follow them through their later modifications, which are both interesting in themselves, and may serve as an example of the way in which we should like to see more difficult mythological problems considered. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh. The Arab's standard of comparison is his camel, the Persian's his horse, and when the mind is much taken up with cows, cows naturally supply the favourite figures of speech. That cow-stealing was a familiar idea to the Vedic Indians is seen in such phrases as: "Release Vasishttha, O king, like a thief who has feasted on stolen oxen;" and though Cacus and Vala are not exactly incarnations, as Professor H. H. Wilson put it, of the local Donald Bean Lean, they certainly presuppose his existence. But the attention paid to this mythical episode of the capture of the heavenly cows by the powers of darkness and drought, has been rather unfairly withheld from other more characteristic, and especially more fertile variations on the original metaphor. The myth of Vala scarcely lived to receive a distinct objective form; and that of Cacus, an old wife's tale without pictorial plausibility or philosophical insight, died out with classical mythology, and left no successors, unless we please to connect it with a not uncommon introduction to Bluebeard stories and some others, in which hero or heroine set forth, like Saul in search of his father's asses, to recover some domestic animal that has been lost or stolen.

But to the ancient Aryans the cow was much more than a domestic animal. To the followers of Zoroaster, converts to agriculture and "the settled life," the earth itself is the great archetypal cow, cut up and offered as a sacrifice, while from its members all things living



proceeded ; the natural world is *Gēus arvā*, the soul of the cow, cut up by the plough for the use of men. The early Deva worshippers, on the other hand, who retained their pastoral habits longer, never gave up the imagery of the dairy, even when they had ceased to draw all their support from its produce. The famous "churning of the ocean" is an instance of this—a legend which seems always to call up a smile on European lips, though really it is not easy to see what image of the mysteries of creation could be better than the familiar, unintelligible process by which the solid evolves itself from the fluid, and the sacrificial butter "comes." Yet older phrases address the "Beautiful Aswins, sowing barley with the plough and *milking* food for man." And when the progress of agriculture has made the state of the harvest an all-important consideration, the heavy rain-clouds become the cows, which Indra drives back "that the brilliant waters may flow freely for man." Beyond this point the metaphor falls a prey to confusion. The Maruts "lead about the powerful horse to make it rain ; they milk the thundering unceasing spring," while the same hymn talks of the "tall bulls of heaven, the manly ones of Rudra . . . scattering raindrops, of awful shape, like giants." At this conjuncture the myth ought to come into being, a conception which is not allegorical, because it commands belief, nor an article of religion, because all know that it has to be understood in a transcendental sense. The Indian mind was too speculative for this objective phase of mythologising to reach anything like the development which it did in Greece, but this once they seem to have gone so far towards personifying the vessel from whence the fertilising showers proceed, that the cows of heaven seem almost to become real mythological entities, not vague metaphors for dawns or days or raindrops, but personages as distinct from all this as the Hermes of the Homeric hymn is from the whistling wind.

The idea of cow is not exhausted with its mythological rendering. A legendary, pseudo-historical belief identifies the fertile land of India with the wonder-working cow that kindled such dire passions in the celestial minds of King Visvamitra and the holy Vasishtha. Here we see the transitional character of the heroic or saga period ; for these worthies belong half to solar mythology, half to playful fairy-tale, and between the two we have to find room for the historical possibility that a Kshatriya champion tried to secularise the established church, and did for a time appropriate the prerogatives of the Brahman class, which, however, almost deserved its subsequent triumph by its skill in putting a good face on defeat. The territorial sense of the cow of plenty is the one on which we are least disposed to dwell. A mere figure of speech does not deserve to be treated with the same respect as a myth in process of being made or remade, and the wonderful cow of the sage introduces us to the tertiary period of popular lore. She is, in fact, the prototype of all those magically productive animals

or talismans which, in later fairy tales serve to satisfy the vulgar human craving after omelettes made without eggs, and blooming conclusions derived from barren premisses, though it is quite possible that the original framers of the myth intended a serious allusion to the rich and inscrutable vital powers of nature. That the cow is to be understood as the sun seems scarcely likely from the tone of the story in the "*Ramayana*," which is, moreover, old enough to reach back to the time when cows were still connected with the idea of fertilizing moisture. Fire and water are the two original good principles, and the Indra, whose chief function it is to bring back the rain-clouds, is only conceived as the sun because it is natural to distinguish between the actor and the object of an action; otherwise Indra might with perfect propriety be looked upon as himself the god of the heavenly streams. Vasishttha's cow has equally various properties, and perhaps the safest way is to consider her as a great image of *natura naturans*, who supplies, as occasion demands, a feast and presents for King Visvamisra and all his hosts, or an endless succession of warriors to resist the profane attempt to capture her by earthly might.

The wonder-working possessions, which are connected with the sun in his narrower and literal sense, are of scarcely inferior antiquity, and may generally be recognised by their aggressive or destructive qualities, whilst the equivalent of the more peaceful benefactions of the cow are stones or other talismans, which coin money and whatever else is required out of nothing, instead of (like the golden goose, &c.) producing it by the idealisation of some natural process. Such perhaps is Sintamani, Indra's jewel, produced, like so many other valuables, at the churning of the ocean; such is certainly the jewel Syamantaka, which was worn by the sun himself, who, on taking it off, appears like a dwarfish copper-coloured man; in Vishnu Purana he gives the jewel to Satrajit, and it yields twelve loads of gold daily, besides bringing good fortune in other respects; but a chaste and virtuous life are indispensable to its possessor, who will otherwise meet with a violent death. Parallels in the fairy tales of all nations are simply innumerable, but later on it became usual to divide the magical qualities amongst three separate articles; and here, again, we must distinguish two co-ordinate forms of the myth. In one the hero acquires (generally by treachery) three things by the help of which he accomplishes the adventure on which he is engaged; two of these are almost always the shoes of swiftness and the cap of darkness, but the third varies. In Somadeva's fairy tales (eleventh century, but the materials, of course, much older) it is a staff which creates whatever you draw with it ("Indra with the rays of the morning gives sense to the senseless and to the formless form"); in the myth of Perseus, where the properties of the helmet of Hades and the shoes are also neglected, it is a wallet, which, perhaps, like that in a modern Hungarian tale, may have been valuable because it would hold what-

ever was put into it (including Gorgons) without being inconveniently full, though such things serve more commonly to supply inexhaustible bread and butter. In "Jack the Giant-killer," and perhaps in the corrected form of the legend, the third gift is the sword of sharpness, which frequently occurs by itself, and sometimes includes the virtues of all the rest, like a wonder-sword, that satisfied every wish, given by a Rakshasi to Indrasena, which was somehow connected with the life of its possessor, who swoons when it is broken. The shoes sometimes transport their owner to the desired locality without even the formality of flying; but a wishing-cloak, in a Wallachian story, brings him next morning where he wished to be the night before, so that he travels through all the hours of darkness. Hahn asks if this is a solar allusion, and the mythological character of all these treasures is sufficiently apparent.

The other story of three gifts, which is a great favourite in modern Europe, is of a less heroic cast. A poor man receives, as a reward for his charity, a table-cloth which covers itself with a splendid feast whenever it is unfolded, a gold-producing animal, and a cudgel which lays on of itself, and so recovers the two other things stolen by a fraudulent innkeeper, or guilefully acquired by a princess; in the latter case, however, instead of the cudgel, nose-elongating apples are the instrument of vengeance. There is not much to be said about the table-cloth, except that it is the last and sadly degenerate representative of Vasishtha's cow. But the golden ass or sheep has an affinity for swindling stories of another type, which, if Hermes be the original clever thief, is mythologically as it should be, though the cynical disintegration of early tradition must have proceeded very far before the golden showers which the wind offers for sale are contemptuously rejected as so much common rain, while the flocks and herds of heaven reflected in the lake are openly treated as an illusion. With the cudgel we can return to the ages of faith. A volume of Esthonian fairy tales, translated into German from Kreuzwald's collection, is very interesting as showing the way in which a people, that has scarcely outgrown the mythological age, keeps revising its traditions and bringing them back into harmony with the prevailing system of natural philosophy. Here we have wishing-shoes, and a hat which enables the wearer to see everything, natural and supernatural, and even to read thought (the light of day?), but the stick undoubtedly transports us at once into the skies. When it is waved through the air everything melts before it; rocks, mountains, and bad spirits disappear, "for it is even stronger than Pickne's arrow, the thunder-bolt." Scarcely less plain is the *chapeau fulminant* of the Slavonic fairy tales collected by M. Chodzko, chiefly for the sake of the traces of Vedic mythology and religion to be found in them. Here we have a productive table-cloth, a girdle that turns to a sheet of water, a cudgel (which is obviously *de trop*), and a hat which shoots of its own accord in every direction; this the author connects with

the wonderful weapons of Rama ("Ramayana," xxx.) in the description of which matter and spirit seem inextricably mixed, or rather convertible; and the Lithuanian tale is certainly very magical, and retains a primitive ring even in the French translation.

All these stories of talismans with a more or less remote mythological origin must be distinguished from the "wishing" fairy tales, and from those in which the fates delight in enriching the stupid or idle hero in spite of the blundering way in which he misuses their gifts. M. Chodzko is most probably right in deriving these tales from the faintly-remembered Indian traditions of the virtue of inaction on the one hand, and the powers of the ascetic will on the other. The Rishis, who acquire by force of penance the power of reducing their enemies to ashes by a look—nay, even the dreadful Visvamitra, whose austerities could call new stars and new gods into being, are near relations of the good little girls in Sicilian or Albanian fairy tales who "pray" themselves out of the difficulties in which they are placed by cruel step-mothers. The choice of the idle, good-for-nothing hero as the favourite of fortune—in the North he is generally stupid, and in the South a spendthrift besides,—is no doubt also in part the expression of a sense that the goddess is blind; but this very fatalism is just what encourages inaction, and on the principle that everything comes right to him who can wait, the despised hero goes on waiting till circumstances are too strong for him, and throw him forcibly into the arms of fortune. Scarcely any of the secondary causes which are suggested in different legends to explain his exaltation, appear to be primitive, though the one in Basile's "Pentamerone" (early seventeenth century) may perhaps be old. The poor younger brother is turned out of doors and takes shelter at a lonely inn. He finds twelve men seated round the table, and in answer to their remarks on the stormy weather, he expresses himself with great propriety on the advantages of change and variety in the seasons. One of the youths then reflects upon the month of March, a blustering, ungenial fellow, for whom, at least, there is nothing to be said. The hero, on the contrary praises him eloquently, he takes away the winter, brings in the spring, and is, apparently, one of the most valuable and indispensable of months. Upon this the young man, who is himself of course the month of March, presents his apologist with a wishing-casket, while the envious brother, who comes a little later, gets a flail in answer to his uncivil speeches. The appearance of the months as mythological personages, which is common in the Slavonic tales, is rather a sign of genuineness, but the notion that fair words are a cheap and profitable investment is of no date in particular. To praise an ugly tree or a muddy fountain is a piece of advice often given in fairy tales, while in Indian poetry the regular way of invoking the assistance of a god is to praise him for the benefits he has not, as yet, begun to confer.

The transitional form of simply "wishing" things into existence

does not last long in popular tradition, though "Wunsch" in Germany had a narrow escape of deification, and the other lines of thought which we have indicated are not, of course, always kept distinct. Thus in the common and always wonderful story of the fish, there seems to be very little of the quasi-religious element, and what might be mythology looks almost more like the remains of a comparatively late superstition. The story is an especial favourite in the East of Europe, where the power of wishing bestowed by the fish is connected with magical formulas such as "By the first word of God and the second of the fish," or "At the pike's command and at my request," but it is told also in modern Greece, and is given in the "Pentamerone" (3), together with the still more remarkable incident of an enchanted fish whose inside contained palaces and gardens and all sorts of wonderful treasures, according to the injured princess accidentally swallowed by him. The latter trait can scarcely be anything but Indian; whether in the other story we have the Fish-Sun, or some other kind of divinity, is a question on which we can scarcely venture to enter, for it would be more inexhaustible even than that of cows. In Germany the fish only appears in connection with the moral tale of the fisherman and his wife, whose wishes grew with indulgence till their impiety was punished by a return to their original poverty. In some versions, but unfortunately for the solar aspect of the fish, not in all, the request which calls down judgment is that the old man and his wife, who are already emperor and empress, may be able to make rain and sunshine like the "Herr Gott" himself.

Nearly all the more familiar legends of the nursery might be followed in this way, and at much greater length, through all their successive modifications, back to the physical or moral conception which first inspired them, and to which, all things considered, they keep so strangely faithful. A volume might be written on younger brothers, from Thraetona, Joseph and Perdiccas, to the hero who with us has, unfortunately, got the name of Boots. The false wife of modern fairy tales has to be traced, if we can, to the shadow-bride whom Saranyu left in the arms of Vivasvat. The Cupid and Psyche formula, with the half-akin Bluebeard tales, has more variations than any, and almost all have some fresh point of interest for the mythologist. Then there is the giant with no heart in his body, of whose legend our "Jack and the Beanstalk" is a part. There is "The Man born to be King" who still flourishes in the nursery; there is "Cinderella," or rather "Peau d'Ane," with her three mythological dresses, about which Grimm has not a word to say; there is "Puss in Boots," sometimes a fox, and in Africa a gazelle; there is the myth of the gifted servants, Grimm's "Sechse durch die Welt," which turned to allegory in Scandinavia; there are the common dragon-killing stories, with their comic parody—these, and dozens of others

are still familiarly told in nearly all the countries of Europe, and, to all appearance, of Asia as well, to say nothing of gleanings in Africa, America, and Polynesia; and it is obvious at a glance that they must have much to teach, both about the migrations of the different nations which tell them, and still more about the wanderings of the ideas presupposed in them. As has been already remarked, the external history and transmission of fairy tales forms a separate subject, and it is one to be avoided if possible, because most of the arguments in support of the alternative theories are of a general, that is to say, an unsatisfactory character, while some of the views propounded by learned Germans are absolutely extravagant, so much so that we can scarcely imagine them to have been meant to apply to fairy tales proper, *Kinder Mährchen*, as distinguished from the realistic fiction current amongst adults.

With regard to compositions of this class (rudimentary romance, not decayed religion), the doctrine of direct, and, as it were, accidental, transmission within historic times is not so incredible in itself, though we have our doubts whether very extensive results are to be hoped for from it; for, in the first place, a great many mediæval romances, since dramatised, were only rationalised and distorted fairy tales; and, in the second place, the jests and anecdotes which have plainly always been of the earth, earthy, are nevertheless in many cases as widely diffused as if they were solar. The story, for instance, of patient Griselda is a perfect psychological puzzle till we discover its origin in the confusion of two, or perhaps three, legendary types; namely, the wife whose children are taken from her by some superior power in consequence of an act of disobedience like Psyche's, the wife whose children are changed for puppy-dogs by a jealous mother-in-law or sisters, and stories of the "Proud Princess" or "Hakon Grizzlebeard" order, in which the husband has some reason for trying his wife's fortitude. It is not so easy to say what Portia and Imogen were originally, but they still live in the Western Highlands (Campbell, 18), in company with ancient fairy elements, while the latter, and Helena (of *All's Well that Ends Well*) are at home in India. Not to multiply instances, we will only mention the story of the grateful corpse ("Tales of the Western Highlands," 32), which is as old as Tobit, was very popular in France under the name of "Jean de Calais," and in Germany as "Der Gute Gerhard," under which title it has been separately treated by Simrock, with abundant learning and rather superabundant mythologising.

The amount of direct evidence which we shall demand in support of the importation of any particular legend will depend on our sense of the antecedent improbability of such modes of transmission; and it is with some hesitation that we venture to cast a doubt upon the conclusions of Professor Max Müller's admirable study of La Fontaine's milkmaid and her Oriental cousins. Yet there certainly does seem to

be a gap just at the most critical point in the chain of derivation. The author shows us the bodily original of "La Laitière et le Pot au Lait" in a work of the thirteenth century, called the "Dialogus Creaturarum optime Moralizatus;" she reappears in Don Juan Manuel's "Conde Lucanor," a century later; and Rabelais mentions her familiarly and, as it were, proverbially. Now the story of the Brahman and the jar of honey, which he breaks while correcting in imagination the son who was to be born when he was rich enough to take a wife, did not come into Europe, it is agreed, before the Greek translation of fables from the "Panchatantra" by Symeon Seth, called "Ichneutes and Stephanites," which was not published till the seventeenth century, and cannot have been very widely known in the Middle Ages on account of its language. The work which did become popular, as the "Directorium Humanæ Vitæ," belongs to the same century as that assigned to the "Dialogus Creaturarum," so that there is no time for us to suppose the story to have modified itself by degrees. But modification is almost too mild an expression for the transformation it has undergone, which is the more striking when we contrast it with the accuracy, not to say servility, of the avowed translations. In these the sex and calling of the Brahman are left unchanged, though to Western ears it must have seemed incongruous for a hermit to be dreaming about a wife and children. If the author of our version had only wished to smooth away this difficulty, it would have been enough to make Perette's family a thing of the future; in which case La Fontaine would have avoided the redundant severity of making her both lose her milk and run the risk of being thrashed besides. In point of fact, the Indian equivalent of "Don't count your chickens before they are hatched" is "Don't educate your children before they are born," and, from this point of view, the story of the jar of honey claims kindred with that of the wise family to which one came to woo. None of the semi-Gothamite stories are more widely spread than this of the girl who falls to weeping at the thought of the accident that may happen to the child who may be born if she marries the man who is meanwhile waiting for something to drink. Such traits are always open to the suspicion of having had, perhaps, originally a grave satirical purpose. The poets of Persia and Scandinavia think nothing of adjourning a *vendetta* to the third generation; Hreidmar and Feridun console the widow of a murdered hero in the same terms: "If you have a daughter instead of a son, give her a husband, and her son shall avenge you." This exaggerated foresight, and the general habit of being too clever by half, are just the kind of things on which popular wit delights to exercise itself; and it is, to say the least of it, possible that its expression in the fable of the milkmaid may have had an independent existence in the West. A modern Greek story has preserved the first or commercial calculation part of the fable. A man named

Penteklimas finds a peascod, and resolves to sow the peas in it; but, instead of doing so, he carries it about with him, and calculates how much money he will have when the peas have multiplied several hundred and thousandfold, and finally bespeaks two hundred vessels to contain his future wealth. The end is that he marries a princess on credit, and finds a treasure by accident; but whether "Ichneutes and Stephanites" have anything to do with his adventures is a question we should prefer to leave open.

An instance of quite undoubted transmission, given by Professor Müller in the same article (*Contemporary Review*, July, 1870), shows that the inner significance and application of a legend are as much exposed to variation as the circumstances of the narrative. The well-known mediæval allegory, which represents the perilous position of man, who, fleeing one danger, falls into another, and finds the protection to which he trusted about to fail and hurl him into worse destruction still, seems as if it must always have had the direct spiritual moral assigned to it in "Barlaam and Josaphat" and the Buddhist original of that work. But, on the contrary, the oldest, and to all appearance the favourite, application of the allegory is to the sin of celibacy. The men hanging downwards by a tree, at the roots of which mice are gnawing, are the ancestors of a person who has neglected to provide himself with a wife and children, so that his family is threatened with extinction. The tree, there can be little doubt, is older than both the social and the ascetic allegory, being, in fact, twin brother of the ash, Yggdrasil, with the branches that drop honey, and one root over the mouth of hell, at which Hwergelmir and Nidhöggr are ever gnawing. Certainly we cannot suppose Buddhist influence in the Edda, but we should be glad to know what was meant by the parable, if the primæval man hung perilously from the great world-tree before Odin and Buddha were dreamt of, for it must have been something very different from a rebuke of old bachelors, or a sermon on religious detachment from earthly pleasures.

The picturesqueness of this bit of traditional description is probably what has kept it alive through so many attempts to "improve" it; for it is not the sort of thing which would be reinvented if once lost, while the uncertainty of its application would tend to weaken its hold on the popular memory. That it has been remembered we see, and we cannot, therefore, wonder at the longevity of riddles, jests, puzzles, and other *jeux d'esprit* which are made on purpose for verbal repetition. Even in England the recitation of fairy tales with careful and literal accuracy seems to have lasted down into the present century, for a Somersetshire woman, in telling a story to Keightley, the author of "Fairy Mythology," ended with the phrase, "And I came away"—a formula to which she attached no meaning, and only repeated because she had been told it so herself, but which



is the exact equivalent of the discontented or sceptical phrases with which Norwegian, Sicilian, or Hungarian peasants break the descent from fairyland to the hardships of life. Phrases like this, and nursery rhymes—the more meaningless the better—are invaluable in enabling us to estimate the probable length of time during which a tradition will remain pure, both before and after its meaning has been forgotten. Of course, even the nursery rhymes had a meaning in the first instance, and numerical jingles like the English doggerel beginning—

“Two Monkeys tied to a clog,  
With a gaping widemouthed waddling frog,”

are treated very seriously indeed in Persian and Sanskrit literature. In the Mahabharata the contest between the royal bard and the child Ashtavakra consists in capping verses of this sort. They proceed alternately. There is but one Yama, Agni and Indra are two, and so on up to twelve Rudras and twelve Adityas. Then it is the bard's turn, and he begins, “Half a month has thirteen days, the wide earth has thirteen islands,” but could not get any further, so the other took it up—“Vishnu walked for thirteen days, and there are thirteen chief rhythms in the Vedas.” There is something of the same formal gymnastic look in a conflict of dark philosophic sayings held in the reign of Bahram Gour, and perhaps even in the arguments by which (according to Firdusi) the Crown Prince Khesra converted his father Khobad from the errors of the communistic heresiarch Mazdek (who, by the way, seems to have been a remarkable man, and quite thirteen centuries in advance of his supposed age—sixth century, A.D.). And Firdusi himself is the hero of a somewhat similar legend. The notion of scolding matches, in which it is important to have the last word, is very common, the devil being generally the defeated respondent. Dialogues of this kind, or the still better known “causation” tales, like the old woman whose pig would not go to market, are our safest guides, both in what concerns the migration of fables, and in ascertaining which incidents and ideas are most welcome and congenial to the unsophisticated mind.

With writers belonging to the sophisticated classes it is always doubtful whether a sentimental archaism or the reproduction of a legendary trait is deliberate or accidental. When Amyas Leigh breaks the crown of his pedagogue with a slate, are we to think of Herakles and his tutor Linus? It is impossible not to do so as we read. But did Mr. Kingsley? If not, we shall scarcely find a better instance of the indestructibility of fiction, unless we look in Dumas, who cannot be suspected of indulging in this kind of classical ingenuity. The ease with which Louis XIV. could be exalted into a solar hero has often been remarked upon, and it certainly looks as if fate rather than chance had been at work in applying to him and Mademoiselle La Vallière the very common incident of three girls who

are overheard wishing for three lovers. In a modern Greek fairy tale (Hahn, 9), the eldest of three sisters wishes to marry the king's cook, the second his treasurer, and the youngest says that if the king's son will marry her, she will bear him three children like the sun, moon, and morning star. The same story occurs in the English translation of Arnason's "Icelandic Tales," and it would be easier to count the collections in which it is wanting, than those which give it in one shape or another. In Dumas' "Vicomte de Bragelonne" two of the maids of honour are expressing their admiration for two of the king's courtiers, and ask Louise for her opinion, which is, that those must be blind who, in the king's presence, can see any one but himself. The conversation is overheard by the parties interested, and this is the beginning of the king's passion. Most probably Dumas, who acted on the principle of taking his goods wherever he found them, had some recollection of having heard an incident of the kind related, and thought it was appropriate to the character of a monarch too illustrious to be conceived as making love himself. In the same way any other mythological idea, when it has once been expressed in terms of human passion or incident, is liable to be supplanted by the literal sense of the tale. The sign and the thing signified change places so often that it is not easy to be very certain which was which in the days of the first literary creations. Even the well-worn solar romance of all the heroes who "love and ride away" may suggest a doubt which is the most certain, that the sun rises and sets every day the whole world over, or that in every country upon which he rises and sets men will be found to love, betray, and die a glorious or a miserable death. To go out in fire and smoke scarcely proves more as to a heavenly origin. The seventh article of advice given by Brynhild to Sigurd runs, in Simrock's translation—

"Mehr frommt Fechten als in Feuer aufgehen  
Mit Hof und Halle."

In war, fire and sword are very real alternatives, as we have been only too lately reminded. When the enemies of a hero are afraid of meeting his irresistible steel, they surround and *smoke* him, and as he refuses to surrender, Burnt Njal and the Nibelungs have as grand a funeral pyre as Herakles. We see that, as early as the Edda, the use of such weapons was not considered chivalrous, and in the abortive attempt at a similar catastrophe in the Mahabharata, the plot is altogether treacherous.

It would be easy to multiply cases where internal evidence is suspicious, and apparent coincidence misleading; but it is time to bring these discursive remarks to an end, with the hope that any unsound interpretations they may contain will be forgiven for the sake of the undoubtedly just conclusion to which they are meant to lead: that in Comparative Mythology, as elsewhere, a grain of fact is worth a pound of theory.

H. LAWRENNY.

## ZUAN THE GONDOLIER.\*

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ON a black and stormy night of October an old man lay dying in his own house, in a little court in the city of Venice. It was a peculiar court—not one of the little “campi” or “campielli” which are so common in the Sea City, and which answer to what in other Italian cities are called “piazze” or “piazzette”—the squares and courts of our own towns. It had been the cloister of a long-since suppressed monastery, the ownership of the buildings of which had passed into private hands. The church, an interesting Gothic brick building of the thirteenth century is, was then, and for many years had been, used as a warehouse, and the adjoining cloister had been let off or sold off into a number of humble private dwellings. In one of these—one of the best of them—old Jacopo Parravich had long lived, and was now dying.

A very picturesque spot is the old cloister—dear to artists—though so hidden away in the labyrinth of Venetian “calle,” or lanes, as to be unknown, and nearly unfindable by the passing tourist. And yet it is so near to the “Salute,” the superb domed church at the head of the Grand Canal, which all the world knows, that the huge towering dome of the more recent church, Longhena’s masterpiece, can be seen from the little cloister raising its head insolently far above the old degraded church of the monastery, which had belonged to a much better period of architecture. Doubtless the cloister, in a picturesque point of view, is far prettier now than it was when inhabited by its original possessors. The beautiful marble columns, with their exquisitely carved capitals, remain, though yellow with dirt and smoke, and festooned with cobwebs. One or two only of the charming Venetian Gothic windows of the rooms above the cloister walk remain; but the habits of the dwellers in them have filled the windows with masses of varied colour—flowers or curtains, or articles hung out to dry—which, harmonised and poetised by the light of a Venetian sky, add just the amount of living tints to the sombre old architecture that an artist requires for his purpose.

But on the October evening in question they were harmonised by no such light, and the appearance of the little cloister and the dwellings around it were sombre and dreary-looking enough. The place itself, from the form and nature of its construction, was much sheltered from the tempest; but the fierce beating of the water in the Grand Canal close at hand against the foundations of the palaces which

\* Zuan is Venetian for Juan, or Giovanni.

enclose it, and against the huge marble steps of the Salute, could be heard amid the roaring of the wind, as it rushed from the lagoon up the channel of the Grand Canal with a force that made even the passing of a gondola from one side of it to the other almost, if not quite, impossible. For little as the fine-weather tourist, luxuriously reclining in his gondola on the placid lagoon, may imagine it, there are times when even the small canals can be navigated by gondolas only with extreme difficulty, and not a gondolier in Venice would think of venturing into the wider and more exposed Grand Canal. For the Adriatic is still the "iracunda Adria" of the ancient poet, and Venice, queen of it though she be, is now and then not a little afraid of her turbulent subject.

And it was on such a night that the long life of the old Jacopo Parravich had found its last sundown—an ending not inappropriate to his past life, as some of the older gossips of the cloister whispered to one another. Only two or three of the older inhabitants, whose lives were also near their close—for old father Parravich had for a long time past—ever since he had lived in the cloister, indeed—been a most respectable man—the most highly respectable man in the little community, indeed. And as to the doings of his younger days, he had doubtless repented of them, or had, in truth, forgotten them—which, of course, came to much about the same thing. But other folks do not forget all that they ought to forget so readily as we might wish them to do. And the *chronique scandaleuse* of the locality had preserved stories of the long-ago times when Jacopo Parravich had been one of the most desperate and boldest smugglers of the coast. He was, as his name indicates, a Dalmatian by origin, like so many others of the inhabitants of the Sea-born City, and like so many of his original countrymen, had been a first-rate sailor.

Well, a smuggler! What's that? Public opinion, especially under such a government as that which then ruled Venice, easily forgives sins against the fisc. But then a bold smuggler may have, in the prosecution of his business, to do deeds that . . . . In short, there *were* old stories. But Signor Parravich, well to do, and with his nest well feathered, had long been, as has been said, a most respectable man and citizen.

He was such a respectable man, that, as sometimes happens, the weight of his respectability had fallen rather heavily on the members of his family. These consisted, at the time of which we are speaking, namely, the night on which the old man died, of one son and one daughter, the children of his old age; for the old man had passed his seventy-fifth year, but his son Jacopo was only twenty-six, and his daughter Zerlina only nineteen. Old Jacopo Parravich had married late in life—in the days of his respectability—and he had been a widower for the last fifteen years.

Now the way in which the burthen of their father's respectability

had fallen heavily on his son and daughter had been that in which similar misfortunes so often manifest themselves—the chapter of love and marriage. Old Parravich, to whom wealth and respectability and a son and heir had come all pretty well together, was very desirous that his son should, in the matter of taking a wife, take at the same time a step in the social ladder. There had not been wanting to the young man an opportunity of doing so, had he chosen to profit by it. Had he so chosen at a time now about five years ago, he might have married a rich wife and settled down at home, with nothing else to do in life than to go to the café every day, to the theatre every Sunday, and *flaner* on the Great Square of St. Mark all day long. But the bright laughing eyes and lithe undulating figure of Ninetta Ponti, the fisherman's daughter at St. Peter's, out beyond the Arsenal, had come between him and this promotion, and rendered it impossible for him. The result had been a very terrible quarrel between him and the masterful old man, his father; and young Jacopo, shaking the dust off his feet, and swearing that he would rather earn wherewithal to keep a wife of his own choosing, than take one chosen for him, even with all the above enumerated advantages, had gone back to his profession—the sea—and was at the present time absent on a voyage as second mate on board a Levantine trader. He had gone, and had taken with him his father's formally-pronounced curse, more especially fulminated and declared to be eternal and irrevocable if he should ever marry the daughter of Zacaria Ponti, the fisherman at St. Pietro.

And a father's curse, so pronounced and motivated, though it had not availed to keep the young man at home and bend him to obedience, was yet a very heavy and terrible thing to the young Venetian. A Florentine would have laughed to scorn any such bugaboo attempt to interfere with his free will. But it is not in Venice as it is in Florence. Feelings of religion are not dead there among the people as they are at Florence. Old respects, old beliefs, old superstitions are still powerful, not only among the women, but among the men of the ancient Sea City, to a greater degree perhaps than they are in any other part of the peninsula. So young Jacopo Parravich, though unyielding, had gone away very heavily burthened by his father's curse, and made still further miserable by the conviction that, even if he should decide to disregard such an obstacle, his timid and gentle little Ninetta would never be brought to consent to a marriage so barred.

As for poor Zerlina, she of course could not meet her father's commands with similar rebellion, though they had been laid on her in a manner equally grievous to her. For two reasons she could not. In the first place it was, of course, impracticable for her to walk out of her father's house and carve her own way in the world. And in the second place, maidenly modesty, and perhaps it may be said, a touch of maidenly coquetry, made such a line of action impossible to

her; for it was the same fertile topic of difference between seniors and juniors which had occasioned stern words of prohibition, none the less galling because Zerlina declared that they were needless, from her father to her.

In truth, it could not but be admitted that the suit of Zuan Contarin for the hand of Jacopo Parravich's daughter was a very bold one; for Zuan, despite his patrician name, was but a gondolier. He was, however, about the best representative of his class in all Venice—the most able, the most steady, and the most prosperous. His tall and slender, yet vigorous and wiry Venetian figure was a picture, as he stood in his white jacket and trousers and scarlet sash on the high poop of his gondola, skilfully piloting it among a crowd of craft of all sorts. His gondola, handsome and thoroughly well appointed in all respects, was his own. It had been a hard struggle to save up the nine hundred or a thousand francs needed for the acquisition of the gondola. But that point once gained, matters soon began to go better with Zuan, and he had already commenced the crescendo process of saving money. In the preceding summer he had been the winner in a Murano regatta, having easily distanced all his competitors in the course from the Lido to the mouth of the Murano canal. And that stroke of good fortune had added some hundred francs to his store at one blow.

For all that it was certainly somewhat audacious of Zuan to lift his eyes to the Signorina Zerlina Parravich; and the retired smuggler was scandalised and indignant at the audacity. Zerlina, in her heart of hearts, was neither scandalised nor indignant. Indeed she did not even pretend to be so. But . . . Zerlina was a spoiled child, and a beauty; and in the somewhat capricious exercise of her sovereign rights as such she inflicted many a heartache upon poor Zuan. “*Si la jeunesse savait!*” If Zuan had had the experience of forty instead of only twenty years, he might have known that Zerlina loved him. If he had been less modest and less strongly impressed by a sense of his own unworthiness of such a prize, he might have guessed the truth. But, as it was, the capricious and wayward beauty had chosen to try her lover's constancy by exercising him with alternate hopes and fears, till Zuan had on a hundred occasions half made up his mind to seek a service on board a long-sea merchantman, and bid adieu to love and Venice for ever!

This was the state of things when Parravich, who had never known a day's illness in his life, was stricken down, and felt sure that his time was come.

It was about an hour after sundown, and the dying old man and his confessor were alone together in his chamber looking into the little cloister. Zerlina was sitting, tearful and frightened, on the top stair of the flight which led down into the cloister walk, a few feet from the door of her father's room, and the woman who had been sent in by the doctor to nurse him had seized the opportunity of

slipping down into the cloister to talk over the state of things with a knot of the women below, and was enjoying the pre-eminence in gossiping to which position and opportunities entitled her.

Of course the first thing to be done, when the old Venetian felt that his hour was come, was to send for his confessor. It was not that his conscience was very heavily burthened by the recollection of certain lawless and violent deeds of his younger days. These matters were so long ago; they lay so far behind him. And they had all been in the way of business. But there was a matter which lay very heavy on his heart, the curse which he had pronounced on his only son, and the sad and unforgiving manner in which they had parted—now, or it would seem for ever! Nor did the teaching and words of his ghostly adviser differ much from the promptings of his own heart in this respect. The old sins were, the confessor was confidently assured, entirely repented of. Of course they were, when for long years past no temptation to the repetition of them had existed. And absolution on all these heads was duly and fully accorded. But then came this knot of the difficulty. The old man had not forgiven his son. It was true that he was miserable because he had *not* forgiven him—would only be too happy to forgive him, on due submission made. But there was still that at the inmost heart of the strong-willed and masterful old man that made free forgiveness, coupled with the knowledge that his son was to be left free to follow his own devices on the subject which had sat so near the old man's heart, that made the needful frame of mind impossible to him. And the exact state of the case was as plain to the trained moral pulse-feeling of the skilled confessor as if it had all been written on the penitent's forehead. The priest, as it happened, was an earnest and scrupulous man; and he could not feel himself justified in telling his penitent to depart in peace, unless he could succeed in first changing his heart in this respect. The old man writhed in his bed, and the sweat broke out in big drops on his furrowed brow. He wrestled hard. But the black drop was at his heart, and the evil will was too strong for him.

It seemed likely that his passing would be like that of Lorenzo de' Medici when Savonarola required of him, as the condition of absolution, that he should, so far as his will went, restore liberty to Florence. All else the dying tyrant could accord. But that was beyond him. And he turned his face to the wall, and died unannealed.

To the old smuggler the case was a hard one. The probing of the good priest was too searching for him! He too turned his face to the wall; but the faithful soul-physician did not give up his struggle with Satan.

Just at that conjuncture hurried steps of several persons were heard from the cloisters below. And in the next minute the old nurse came into the room, saying that one of the neighbours urgently desired to speak to the dying man. The tidings he brought were to the effect

that the ship in which young Jacopo Parravich sailed had been signalled from Malamocco. He knew the fact from the broker under the Procaratie Vecchie, to whom the vessel was consigned. The real discoverer and sender of the news was old Pietro Ponti, the fisherman, Ninetta's father, who had heard of the ship's arrival an hour or two ago from a boatman who had just come in from the Lido with difficulty through the storm. But he knew too well that it would not be wise for him to be the bearer of the news. So he sent it to the dying father by one of his neighbours.

Yes, Jacopo's ship and Jacopo were at Malamocco, the port at the entrance of the lagoon. But there was not the smallest chance that the pilot would dream of attempting to bring the vessel into the lagoon and to Venice in the face of the tempest that was then raging. No doubt by the evening of the following day she would be anchored in front of the Riva degli Schiavoni. But old Jacopo felt all too surely that that would be too late for him!

"What is it to me," said the old man bitterly, "whether he is at Malamocco or at the world's end? One is as far off as t'other such a night as this; . . . and I shall never see the morning! If I could but see him, I . . . ." The unhappy man turned wearily in his bed, and moaned aloud.

Zerlina had accompanied the bringer of the news to the door of her father's room, and comprehended the whole of the circumstances and bearing of the situation in a moment. A sudden thought dashed through her brain. But it was a thought that first caused the tide of her blood to rush violently to her neck, her cheeks, her forehead, till she felt it tingling in her ears, and at the roots of her hair, and then as suddenly to retreat to the heart, leaving her fair oval face as white as marble beneath the glossy braids of her dark hair.

Was there no possible way by which her brother might be brought to that bedside before to-morrow's dawn, when so much, so terribly much for the eternal weal of the one man and for this world's happiness for the other might depend upon that meeting? No way!

Zerlina thought there might be one possibility—one, and one only! But the thought, as has been seen, was not one that commended itself to easy and welcome acceptance.

Zuan Contarin could take his gondola to Malamocco, and bring back her brother in four or five hours! If there was not another gondolier in Venice who would attempt the task, Zerlina felt the most perfect assurance that Zuan could do it, . . . and *would* do it . . . if she chose to ask it of him.

Ay, but *could* she bring herself to do that asking? She had been cruel to him at their last meeting. It had been the evening of a festa—a rare holiday for Zuan. And, dressed in all his best (and how handsome Zerlina thought he looked!), he had timidly proffered his petition to be allowed to escort her to the Lido, where there were to be gala doings and fireworks. But Zerlina had tossed her head, and



told him that it was quite out of the question; she was engaged to go with Signore Marco Tron. He was the son of a rich jeweller, who wore broadcloth and a chimney-pot hat, which was certainly more fitted than a poor man's jacket to consort with Zerlina's holiday muslin dress, and killing little hat, and boots with heels as high as any lady's in the land. Poor Zuan had slunk away, and watched her privily as young Tron led her to a gondola. And Zerlina had caught sight of him, and with a toss of her head had instantly begun talking and laughing with her companion with every appearance of the utmost enjoyment. And what a bore she had found young Tron! And now, as the punishing idea suggested itself to her mind for an instant of the amount of help that could be got from *him* in her present strait, ah, how ineffably contemptible and null he seemed to her in comparison to her lover of low degree!

But, after all this (and much previous treatment of the same sort), *could* she go to Zuan, and ask him to do this thing . . . for her sake? *For her sake!* For though her confidence was boundless in Zuan's prowess and skill, she knew well enough that the task was not one which any human being in Venice would undertake save for some such motive as that which she well knew "for her sake" would be to Zuan. Could she bring herself to do this?

Reserving the reply to this question for yet farther consideration, during the walk she meditated, and whispering to herself, "For life and death! for life and death! for more than life and death! for poor old father's soul!" she hurriedly put on her cloak, tied a handkerchief over her head, and quietly slipped out of the house, saying no word to any one, and unnoticed by any.

She knew well where Zuan was to be found. He lived with his widowed mother, who was the portress and care-taker of a huge old empty palace in one of the little "campi" behind the Riva degli Schiavoni, as the long quay is called which faces the island of St. Giorgio Maggiore and the lagoon. The owner of the once splendid, but now dilapidated, house in question lived in Paris, and old mother Contarin had for many years had the care of it. And her son had the advantage of gratuitous lodging in the rooms on the ground-floor occupied by his mother. She might have lodged half a dozen more sons there, if she had had them, without any injury done to the owner, or objection on his part. And on such a night as that Zuan was very sure to be at home. It would have needed a long walk for Zerlina to reach the part of the town to which she was bound at a period a few years earlier, for she would have had to go all round by the Rialto, seeing that not a man at the "traghetto" would have attempted to pull her across the Grand Canal. But the much-abused iron bridge, raised by an English engineer and speculator, in the immediate neighbourhood of the far-famed Gallery of the Belle Arti stood her in good stead, though she almost thought she should have been blown off it as she crossed. Holding hard on to the rail, she

made the passage, however, in safety, and found herself at the door of old Anna Contarin's porter's lodge almost sooner than she wished. For her reluctance to the task before her was extreme, and she had made no progress in determining in what words she would put the matter before her lover.

"*Madre di Dio!*" exclaimed Zuan, coming to the door, "*la Signorina Zerlina!* on such a night as this!"

"What has happened, *ragazza mia?*" said the old woman, who knew too much of Zerlina's treatment of her son to wish to be specially civil to her. "You look as if you had seen the ghosts of all the unbelieving Jews who lie buried on the Lido! You are as white as any ghost yourself. In God's name what is the matter?"

"Father is very ill," said Zerlina, catching at the chance of addressing herself in the first instance to the mother instead of to the son; "he is so ill that he is dying. The doctor says that he cannot live through the night."

"*Cospetto!* And he looking but the other day as if he would live for a hundred years!" exclaimed the old woman.

"If I had only known that there was trouble in your home, Signorina Zerlina! To think of your coming out such a night as this! But of course you are wanting help. Shall mother go with you to help nurse Signor Jacopo? Only say what we can do to be useful to you. Ah, Zerlina! don't you know that I would give my eyes to have the pleasure of serving you?"

"Father sent me, Signor Zuan," began Zerlina, who was now as violently red as she had been white before, "father sent me to say . . . ." Then, suddenly struck by the unworthiness of such a pretence, and of the feeling that prompted her to wish to obtain the services of Zuan on any ostensible terms save those which were in very truth to be the price of them, she checked herself; and becoming yet more scarlet in the face, and casting her eyes on the ground, added, "No! not that! poor father! he is too ill to do that, . . . . but . . . . he is sadly, terribly in want of what no one but a gondolier, such as is hardly to be found in all Venice, can do for him, and . . . . and I thought . . . ."

"A gondolier! *Eccomi!* of course you know that anything one of my trade could do . . . ."

"To serve a dying man for his soul's welfare?" said Zerlina, venturing a glance up into his eyes.

"His soul's welfare!" said Zuan with a curious air of mixed reverence and disappointment. "Be it what it may, Signorina Zerlina, I am ready. Only say what is needed."

"Poor Jacopo is come back! His ship is signalled. She lies in Malamocco harbour. You know how father and he parted. Father can't bring himself to forgive him; and the priest will not give him absolution. And . . . . oh, if Jacopo could only come to him before it is too late! Father said, as he lay moaning fit to break

your heart, 'if only he could see him!' But father will be dead before morning."

And Zerlina dropped her head upon her bosom, and looked fixedly on the ground.

"If he can't live till morning, and a bit longer," said the old woman, "he'll never see Jacopo again, that's certain. As well be at Smyrna as at Malamocco such a night as this. You don't suppose the ship is going to come in to-night, do you?"

"But Jacopo may be fetched! To be sure! That's what a gondolier can do! Of course! In five hours from now, Signorina Zerlina, Jacopo shall be here," said Zuan with joyous alacrity, preparing instantly to set about the task before him. "The gondola is at the riva!" he added.

"Are you mad, stark mad?" cried the old woman, "and are you not ashamed, girl, to come here tempting an only son to risk his life? You who . . . ."

"Hush, mother! Risk my life? Not a bit of it! But if it were to risk my life" . . . Here he shot a glance at Zerlina's face, the magnetism of which was too strong for her to avoid a momentary raising of her eyes to meet his. . . . "And for the sake of a passing soul!" added Zuan with a tone of pious awe.

"A passing soul! For the sake of a white face and a pair of brown eyes, which were always too proud to look on you, you poor fool!" cried his mother. "You mean thing!" she went on, turning to the trembling girl; "how can you have the face to ask such a thing, and yet not the honest heart to say to a lad that worships you,—the more fool he!—'for my sake, *amor mio*!'"

"Hush, mother!" cried Zuan, now as red as Zerlina.

"It is for my sake, Zuan!" said Zerlina with tremulous lips, and not daring to look up. She had never called him simply Zuan before.

Zuan snatched her hand and pressed his lips upon it. "In five hours Jacopo shall be in Venice!"

"You shall not go!" screamed his mother.

"Not all hell should stop me! Mother, dearest mother, there is no danger beyond a wet skin. I shall be here long before morning. I promise it to you."

And with that he opened the door, and prepared to step out into the storm, which appeared to be raging worse than ever. Zerlina, without saying another word, stepped towards the door, as to accompany him.

"It is all in your way to the cloister, Signorina Zerlina. I can at least see you so far home," said Zuan, shutting the door behind him, as they both stepped out into the night; "and then . . . ."

"But I must go with you in the gondola, Zuan," said Zerlina, as she gathered her cloak about her.

"You! . . . . to Malamocco! . . . . this night! No! that will

never do ! Not for a million crowns ! No, Signorina Zerlina ; you must go home. I shall bring Jacopo to you."

"But is there then danger . . . danger to life, Zuan ?" asked Zerlina, taking his arm for the first time with a hand that he felt to tremble on it, though the force of the tempest might have been a sufficient excuse for doing so before.

"Danger ? well . . . it is not a pleasant night certainly—not a night for such as you, Signorina, to be on the lagoon. Besides, it will be better to have no passenger in the boat. I shall take a spare oar for Jacopo coming back ; . . . and perhaps I may find at the riva a friend who will go with me. Two oars are better than one. But for you ! No, Signorina, I can't take it upon myself to do that !"

"Please, let me go with you !" said Zerlina, with just the slightest pressure of her hand on his arm, and in a submissive tone of entreaty that seemed to Zuan's ears to alter very strangely the relative situation of both of them towards the other. For a moment he was beset by a strong temptation to accede to her request. The extraordinary monstrosity of a set of circumstances that should bring it to pass that Zerlina should sue to him, and he refuse her prayer, joined to a sudden imagination of the joy of having her under his protection, his alone in all the world, out on the wild lagoon, saving her life perchance with his strong arm around her, almost made him waver. But in the next instant good sense, the consciousness of what was right, and of what was best for her, returned in their full force, and enabled him to say—

"No, Signorina Zerlina, that cannot be ; I should be doing very wrong. I don't look to any mischief. But . . . the gondola may capsize. I should not be much the worse if it did," he hastened to add, as he felt a tremor of her arm and a nervous clutching of her hand ; "but if I failed to save you ! . . ."

"Zuan ! If you don't come back I should not care to live."

"Jacopo shall be brought back safe and sound, Signorina Zerlina," returned Zuan, cruel this time in his turn to the girl, who, in the stress of the moment, had cast her girlish pride of coquetry so far behind her.

"Zuan !" said Zerlina, still more palpably pressing his arm, and adding no further word. It was not said in a tone of remonstrance, but of such gentle, humble, loving appeal that to her lover's ear it was as good as a thousand.

"Zerlina !" he said. It was the first time he had ever so addressed her ; and the word was unmistakably replied to by another pressure of the arm.

"I am to go with you, Zuan, . . . now and . . ." The word that should have followed died on her lips.

"Not on the lagoon to-night, Zerlina ! . . . my love, my life, soul of my life, my treasure, my best and dearest !" he cried,

hurriedly rushing on the words with his tongue suddenly loosened. "See, my own treasure! here is the riva. My gondola is under that bridge. Do not let us lose time. You make haste home to your father, and tell him Jacopo will soon be here. And leave the rest to me."

"You are the master, Zuan!" she said submissively, and turned away to go. But she had not gone three steps before she turned, and again coming to his side, said—

"Zuan, I am afraid! I begin to wish that I had not asked you to do this thing. If . . . if you should . . . not come back . . . I would give almost anything that father should see Jacopo before he dies; but not even for that would I lose you!"

She looked up into his face through the darkness as she stood by his side. It was almost an invitation. Had it not seemed so Zuan would not have taken the advantage which the situation made for him. As it was, he threw his arms round her and pressed one long kiss, with all his soul in it, on her lips, and then turned quickly away towards his boat, saying:—

"Now, my own, my own love, I am strong enough for anything! Have no doubt, Zerlina. In five hours you will see me again."

Zerlina found her way back to the little dwelling in the cloister more slowly than she had come thence, musing, despite the tumult of the storm around her, and not upon the subject, near as it was to her heart, which had occupied her thoughts as she came.

Zuan jumped into his boat, and pushed out at once into the lagoon, taking no heed of the exclamations and questions of the few bystanders, who, with the constant interest of seafaring people in a storm, were standing on the riva. He made no attempt at getting any companion in his enterprise, as he had spoken of doing. He had never really intended anything of the kind. He knew too well that no inducement he had to offer would suffice to tempt any gondolier in Venice to share his task. He had only spoken of such a thing to tranquillise his mother and Zerlina. But he did take a second oar, for he reckoned on the assistance of Jacopo in coming back. Fortunately it would be on the return that the assistance was most needed, for on going out he had the tide with him. Nevertheless, the low water was a source of difficulty, for it was only by the greatest exertion and by watchful vigilance that he could avoid being blown by the wind upon one of the shoals which make the navigation of the lagoon so intricate. And this danger was added to by the pitchy darkness of the night. Nothing but such a life-long acquaintance with every inch of the lagoon, as made the knowledge of the localities seem like instinct, could have availed to keep the gondola in its proper course. And with all his thorough knowledge and all the vigour of his manhood in its prime, Zuan soon found that he had undertaken to the very full as much as he could perform. He did however, reach the *Divina Providenza*—that was the name of

Jacopo's ship—in safety at the end of two hours of such labour as he had never, even in a racing struggle, undergone before. The active and skilled gondolier, having the tide with him, will, in ordinary weather, reach Malamocco in an hour. It was at the end of two long hours that Zuan, wiping the perspiration from his brow jumped upon the deck of the *Divina Provvidenza*, to the extreme astonishment of her crew.

Meantime Zerlina had reached the shelter of the little cloister on her return. She found the nurse sitting at the bottom of the stairs, and the same knot of neighbours profiting by the godsend of a subject for endless gossip, which the event in process of completion up-stairs afforded them. When would an Italian tire of sitting still, *al fresco*, and gossiping? Zerlina learned that her father had fallen asleep, utterly exhausted, and the priest had gone away, promising to return in a few hours. No questions were asked respecting Zerlina's absence. The gossips were too much engaged in their own amusement. She was wet through, and after pausing for a minute by her sleeping father's bed-side, she went to change her clothes.

And all this time she found it impossible to bring her mind to bear otherwise than dreamingly, and, as it were, through a haze, upon the matters that had occupied it so entirely and so actively before she had started on her expedition. It seemed as if everything in the world had changed, as far as she was concerned, and the most pressing interest of the passing moment seemed to be listening to the roaring of the storm, and striving to estimate the probabilities of its being on the increase or on the decline in the lagoons.

She stood at the window of her little room, which looked on to the Grand Canal, gazing out into the darkness, listening intently, and apparently dreaming, but, in fact, waiting—waiting with intense anxiety—till she heard, after awhile—she could not at all tell how long—voices in her father's room. He had waked from his troublous sleep—stupor rather than sleep—and the priest had returned.

"If Jacopo wanted my forgiveness, he would have come for it! Storm! what's the storm? The lagoons? a storm in a puddle!" moaned the old man, forgetting, in his unreason, that it was impossible that his son should know that he was dying.

Then there was a sudden running and trampling of feet in the cloister below; the priest stepped hastily to the door, and in the next minute returned to the bed-side, saying, in distinct, calm tones—

"Jacopo is here. God, in his mercy, has sent him to you to receive your forgiveness and your blessing."

And in another instant his son, with nothing but his trousers and shirt on, drenched with salt water, and the perspiration streaming from his face, was on his knees beside the dying man's bed.

"Father, you will forgive me! You will give me your blessing!"

The dying man moved his shaking hand with difficulty, and succeeded in laying it on the wet, dark curls that covered his son's head.

"Jacopo!" he said. Yes, it is Jacopo! If you will promise me, my son . . . ."

But here the priest broke in, strongly and resolutely, speaking with all the majesty of his office:—

"Jacopo Parravich, God, in his boundless mercy and goodness, has allowed your son to come to you, that your soul may be saved from the perdition of passing to his judgment with the hideous guilt of an unnatural curse blackening your whole heart. And you make conditions! Man, dying man, who, in a few minutes, will stand before your Judge, you make conditions with God! Miserable sinner, accept the mercy offered to you. Let the blessing of peace, of charity, and of love enter your heart. Your son has risked his life to come to you. Take him to your heart, while the time is yet spared to you!"

Jacopo insinuated his arm beneath his father's head, and round his neck. In doing so his dripping shirt-sleeve touched the old man's lips.

"Salt water!" said the old smuggler. "Why, boy, you have been under water!"

"Pretty nearly, father. Zuan Cantarin and I had a hard job to cross the lagoon. It was he that brought me to you. Without him I should not have known how it was with you."

"Zuan Contarin! Zuan with his gondola! Is Zuan here?" said the old man, striving to raise his head from the pillow.

Zerlina was standing at the bed-head on the further side, and looking across it, had, from the beginning of this scene, marked her lover, who, taller by half a head than any of the others, was looking into the room from behind the little knot who were gathered at the door.

"Zuan Contarin is here, father," she said, bending down her head to whisper in his ear.

"Zuan Contarin!" said the dying man. And Zuan, coming forward, stood by the side of Jacopo at the bed-side. "Zuan," continued he, gasping, "you are a brave lad! You have done me a good turn at sore need. I could have done as much once; but the lagoon is ugly such a night as this. I know your terms for the job, my lad. Zerlina, give him the reward he has earned."

"Here is Jacopo, papa Parravich, your son!" said Zuan, with rare thoughtfulness for others rather than himself. But his eyes were free to ask and receive Zerlina's obedience to her father's commands.

"God bless you, Jacopo, my son! It was good of you to come to me. And oh, father (to the priest), what a difference there is here!" striking his bosom as he spoke. "Zuan, Jacopo, Zerlina, God bless you, my children!"

T. A. TROLLOPE.

## VOLTAIRE ON HAMLET.

“Two little English books inform us,” says Jérôme Carre, alias M. de Voltaire, “that this nation, famous for so many excellent works and so many famous enterprises, is possessed of two excellent tragic poets: one is Shakespeare, who is said greatly to surpass Corneille; the other the tender Otway, much superior to the tender Racine.”

STRANGE as it may appear, this was actually news to France in the eighteenth century, for Voltaire was almost the only Frenchman of his day who had studied Shakespeare. In 1762, when he sent his translation of *Julius Cæsar* to the academy (a play he much admired in spite of what he called its barbarous irregularities) D'Alembert wrote to him “The Academy trusts to you for the faithfulness of the translation, not having besides the original before them;” so that at a time when amidst the conflicts of the period England was acknowledged as the point to which the eyes of sages and philosophers were to be directed, a model for institutions, laws, and morals, her language was considered a barbarous one, and German hardly less so; France having arrogated to herself the sole supremacy in matters of taste over all other nations, whose only chance of literary glory was to imitate her—herself the imitatrix of the ancients!

“Taste will never pass into Germany” the King of Prussia wrote to Voltaire in 1775, “unless by the study of the classics, Greek and Roman, as well as French!” and a few years later he recommended the Duc de Montmorency not to learn German, “for,” said he, “it is not worth your pains, seeing we have no good authors.” The reason of so blind and ignorant a prejudice was this: those who had passed their lives in the company of the Greek tragedians would not admit of the slightest infringement of the monotonous and frigid rules which appeared to them to have been laid down by Eschylus and by Euripides, although there is probably not a single play of theirs in which the three unities, beyond which it was decreed that there could be no salvation, were really observed. With nearly one hundred private theatres in Paris alone, their *Britannicus*, *Phædre*, *Athalie*, sufficed to bound their ideas of dramatic excellence; and although the bulk of the people might not have been so fastidious, and may even in the provinces have condescended to patronise melodrama, Louis XIVth, in his gallery at Versailles, and those who came after him, were quite satisfied with their own classic drama, and would have been astonished could they have anticipated



that the verdict of time would be, that the true heirs of the Greeks were neither Racine nor Voltaire—but Shakespeare—but Schiller—but even more modern and more romantic writers! Some faint suspicion of this, some latent doubt of the lasting nature of rules so narrow and so severe, pierces however occasionally through Voltaire's more stringent criticisms. In his preface to the *Orphelin de la Chine* he says, "were the French not so very French, my Chinese would have been more Chinese, and Gengis still more a Tartar; but I had to impoverish my ideas and to hamper myself in the costume, in order to avoid shocking a frivolous nation, which laughs sillily and thinks it should laugh heartily at all that is not in keeping with its own manners, or rather with its own fashions."

Fondly as he clung to the full dressed and formal beauty of the tragedies of his time, in which a nice observance of social punctilio was to be followed in the height of passion, and like Cæsar after his death-blow, every victim was to writhe in his agony with due decorum, he could not help admitting that there were some inconsistencies which prevented the acting from being truly tragic. The arrangements of the stage, the paltry inadequacy of the scenery, and the ridiculous magnificence of the dresses, could not fail to strike a lover of art, as drawbacks to the true realisation of the scenes to be represented.

"Our playhouses," he admits, "when compared with the Greek and Roman theatres, are what our markets, our Place de Grève, our small village wells, are to the aqueducts and fountains of Agrippa, the Forum Trajani, the Coliseum, and the Capitol. Mountebanks hire a tennis court that they may have *Cinna* acted on a temporary stage. What can be done on a score of planks crowded with spectators?"

In 1740 the Emperor Augustus would appear on the stage covered with a square wig reaching to his waist stuck over with laurel leaves, and topped with a big hat over which again nodded a double range of red feathers.

A king, whether a Nicomedes or an Attila, was to be seen invariably in white gloves with gold fringes, the seams of his clothes laced over, and glass diamonds on his sword. Jocasta and Agrippina wore wide hoops and powdered hair, and attitudes and gestures were made to correspond to these masquerade habiliments.

Mademoiselle Clairon was the first actress to throw off the yoke of settled custom. She appeared all at once at the Versailles Theatre in the character of Roxana, without a hoop, her arms half uncovered, and in true Oriental costume. Her success was undoubted, although people did not know what to make of it; but the revolution just then did not go much beyond outward forms. The public showed a disposition to rebel against the most innocent innovations, and Voltaire himself, although a more natural and less monotonous declamation

moved him even to tears in the representation of his own "Electre," remained immovable in his attachment to the old rules.

Once in the wrong, he was one of those men who would plunge into error as deeply as possible, and would never quit a false or dangerous idea till he had exhausted it. "Never," says one of his biographers, "had a man more constantly the air of not only being in the right, but of being incapable of being in the wrong;" and yet without even going into his grossest errors, how many of his reasonings do we find inaccurate and incomplete! how many facts seen only from one point of view!

He spent his time in arguing for exceptions against the rule,—for abuses against use,—for evil against good! We find wit and good sense often meeting in him, but if an option has to be made, he does not hesitate. We ever find him witty rather than accurate, piquant rather than wise.

It was in this mood that he undertook his criticism, or rather his burlesque of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

He would perhaps have preferred finding his countrymen a little less ignorant on the subject, for to attack a man who is defended by nobody is, to say the best of it, hardly exciting, and we therefore find him waging for some years with the great English dramatist a somewhat underhand and indecisive warfare. He pronounces him ignoble, ridiculous, barbarous, but adds "Although Italians, French, and literary men of all countries take him for the merry Andrew of a fair, you find in him pieces that elevate the imagination and pierce the heart. It is truth, it is nature herself speaking her own language without any admixture of art. It is the sublime, yet the author has not sought for it; in fact there is one thing more extraordinary than all, and that is that Shakespeare is a genius!"

When, however, Letourneur published his translation of Shakespeare accompanied with exaggerated praises, and much softened down besides, where a literal rendering would have grated on French ears, Voltaire, alarmed at the spirit of innovation which he foresaw, was about to take formidable proportions, took up the cudgels in more sober earnest, and, although he was then in his eighty-third year, the academy received a long letter from him, a formal act against the English drama, in which he wrote,—“I am ever amazed that a nation which has produced men of genius, taste, and even of delicacy, should still affect to be vain of this abominable Shakespeare!”

It was resolved that this letter should be read at a public and solemn meeting. It passed off very triumphantly for the author, D'Alembert writing to him that the English who were present went away much chop fallen! but violent as was the onslaught, it was wild and impartial compared with his summary of the tragedy of *Hamlet*, which he offers to all readers from Petersburg to Naples as a

fair specimen of the excellent tragic poet who is supposed to surpass Corneille,—“the mountebank who has some happy strokes and who makes contortions.”

The little essay, which the author evidently intends to be taken as a model of enlightened and unprejudiced criticism, begins with the remark that it is impossible to hinder a whole nation from liking a poet of his own better than one of another country, and that although there is not a man of learning in Russia, in Italy, in Germany, in Spain, in Switzerland, or in Holland who is not acquainted with *Cinna* and *Phædra*, very few of them have any knowledge of the works of Shakespeare, and that this is a great prejudice in favour of the former; however, he candidly remarks, it is but a prejudice.

“The papers relative to the suit,” he says, “should be produced before the bar. *Hamlet* is one of the most admirable pieces of Shakespeare, as well as one of those which are oftenest represented. We shall faithfully lay it before the judges.”

#### PLAN OF THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET.

“The subject of *Hamlet Prince of Denmark* is pretty nearly the same with that of *Electra*. Hamlet, King of Denmark, was poisoned by his brother Claudius and his Queen Gertrude, who poured poison into his ear whilst he was asleep. Claudius succeeded the deceased, and a few days after the burying, the widow married the brother-in-law. Nobody had ever entertained the least suspicion of the late King Hamlet’s being poisoned in the manner above related. Claudius reigns in peace.

“Two soldiers being upon guard before the gate of Claudius’s palace, one says to the other, ‘How has your hour passed?’ the other answers ‘Very well, I have not heard a mouse stir.’ After some discourse of the same nature, the Ghost appears, dressed like the late King Hamlet; one of the soldiers says to his comrade, ‘Speak to the Ghost, you are a scholar.’ ‘That I will,’ says the other. ‘Stay and speak, Phantom, I command you.’ The apparition disappears without answering. The two soldiers, in astonishment, talk of it. The learned soldier remembers that he had heard that the same thing had happened at the time of the death of Cæsar; tombs were opened, the dead in their shrouds screamed and leaped about in the streets of Rome; it, without doubt, is the presage of some extraordinary event!

“At these words, the Ghost appears a second time; then one of the guards cries out, ‘Phantom, what would you have? what can I do for you? is your coming occasioned by any hidden treasures?’

“Then the cock crows. The Ghost walks off slowly. The sentinels propose striking it with a halberd in order to stop it, but it flies, and the soldiers conclude that it is customary with ghosts to vanish at the

crowing of the cock. 'For,' say they, 'at the time of Advent Christmas Eve, the bird of dawning sings all night, and then spirits dare not wander any longer; the nights are wholesome, the planets shed no bad influence, fairies and sorcerers are without power at so holy and blessed a season.'

"Observe by-the-bye, that this is one of the striking passages that Pope has marked with commas in his edition of Shakespeare, to make readers take notice of its excellence.

"After the Ghost has thus made his appearance, King Claudius, Gertrude his Queen, and the courtiers join in a conversation in the hall of the palace. Young Hamlet, son of the poisoned monarch, the hero of the piece, receives with sadness and melancholy the marks of friendship shown him by Claudius and Gertrude: this Prince was far from suspecting that his father had been poisoned by them, but he was highly displeased that his mother had so soon married the brother of her first husband.

"Gertrude dissuades her son from continuing to wear mourning for his father to no purpose. 'It is not,' says he, 'my coat as black as ink, nor the appearance of grief, which constitute the real mourning; this mourning is at the bottom of the heart, the rest is only vain parade.' He declares that he has an inclination to quit Denmark and go to school at Wittenburg. 'Dear Hamlet,' says the Queen, 'do not go to school at Wittenburg, stay with us!' Hamlet answers that he will endeavour to obey her. Claudius is charmed at the answer, and orders that all of his court should go and drink, whilst the cannons were fired off, though gunpowder was not invented."

Hamlet's soliloquy which follows is then paraphrased in the same spirit of veracious criticism. "Pope," he remarks here, "again gives notice to his readers that this passage is worthy of their admiration."

The *précis* of the story is continued in a literal translation of the advice which Laertes gives his sister upon the subject of the Prince's love for her, and by a similarly faithful transcript of the Ghost's address to Hamlet, when they return to the stage "quite familiar with each other."

"The King and Queen," he goes on, "talk a long time of the madness of the Prince. Ambassadors from Norway arrive at court and hear this accident. The good man, Polonius, who is an old dotard, much more crazy than Hamlet, assures the King that he will take care of this disordered person. 'Tis my duty,' says he; 'for what is duty? 'Tis duty—just as day is day, and night night, and time time; therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit, and loquacity the body, I will be brief. Your noble son is mad; for what is madness but being mad? In fine, madam, he is mad. This is fact; it is a great pity; it is a great pity it should be true; the only business now is to find the cause of the effect. Now the cause is that I have a

daughter!' To prove that it was love which had deprived the Prince of his senses, he reads to the King and Queen the letters that Hamlet had written to Ophelia. Whilst thus the King and Queen and all the court talk of the melancholy condition of the Prince, he arrives in great disorder, and by his discourse confirms the opinion that had been conceived of his madness; he, however, sometimes makes answers that discover a soul deeply wounded, and which are replete with good sense.

"The chamberlains, who have orders to amuse him, propose to him to hear a company of comedians, who were just arrived; Hamlet talks very rationally of plays. The players act a scene before him; he gives his opinion of it with great good sense. Afterwards, when he is alone, he declares that he is not so mad as he appears to be. He forms a resolution to avail himself of the above-mentioned players, and directs them to play a pantomime, in which one is to sleep and another to pour poison into his ear. It is very certain that if King Claudius is guilty, he will be greatly surprised when he sees the pantomime; he will then turn pale, his guilt will be seen upon his face; Hamlet will be sure of the crime, and will have a right to avenge. Thus said, thus done.

"The company comes and represents the scene in dumb show before the King, the Queen, and the whole court," and the dumb show is succeeded by a scene in verse.

"The King and Queen look upon these two scenes as highly impertinent. They suspect Hamlet of having played them a trick, and of not being quite so great a madman as he appeared to be; this idea gave them great perplexity: they trembled with fear of having been detected. What course could they take? King Claudius resolves to send Hamlet to England, upon pretext of curing his madness, and writes to his good friend the King of England, to desire it as a favour of him that he would hang the young traveller on the receipt of his letter. But the Queen is desirous of questioning and sounding Hamlet before his departure; and for fear he should do some mischief in his madness, the old chamberlain, Polonius, hides himself behind a tapestry hanging, in order to come to the Queen's assistance if there should be occasion.

"The Prince, who was mad, or pretended to be so, comes to confer with his mother Gertrude; in this way he sees in a corner King Claudius, who was seized with a fit of remorse; he is afraid of being damned for having poisoned his brother, married his widow, and usurped the crown. He kneels down and makes a short prayer—not worth repeating. Hamlet at first has an inclination to take that time in order to kill him; but, reflecting that Claudius is in a state of grace, he takes care not to kill him in such circumstances.

"This likewise is a passage which Pope's commas direct us to admire. Hamlet then, having deferred the murder of Claudius in

order to damn him, comes to confer with his mother; and notwithstanding his madness, overwhelms her with such bitter reproaches of her crime as to pierce her to the very heart. The old chamberlain, Polonius, is apprehensive of his carrying matters too far; he cries out for help behind the hanging. Hamlet takes it for granted that it was the King who had hidden himself there, to listen to their conversation. 'Ah, mother!' cries he, 'there is a great rat behind the hangings.' He thereupon draws his sword, runs to the rat, and kills the good man Polonius.

"The good Lord Chamberlain was an old fool, and is represented as such, as has already been seen. His daughter, Ophelia, who no doubt resembled him in this respect, becomes raving mad when she is informed of her father's death; she runs upon the stage with flowers and straw upon her head, sings ballads, and then goes and drowns herself. Thus there are three mad people in the play—Ophelia, the chamberlain, and Hamlet, without reckoning the other buffoons who play their parts.

"The corpse of Ophelia is taken out of the river, and her funeral is prepared. In the meantime King Claudius had made the Prince embark for England. Hamlet, whilst upon his passage, had conceived a suspicion that he had been sent to London with some treacherous design: he finds in the pocket of one of the chamberlains, his conductor, the letter of King Claudius to his friend the King of England to despatch him the moment of his arrival. What does he do? He happened, luckily, to have the great seal of his father in his purse; he throws the letter into the sea, and writes another, which he signs with the name of Claudius, and requests the King of England to hang the bearer upon their arrival; then he folds up the whole packet, and seals it with the seal of the kingdom. This done, he finds a pretext for returning to court. The first thing he sees is two grave-diggers digging Ophelia's grave. These two labourers are also buffoons in the tragedy; they discuss the question whether Ophelia should be buried in consecrated ground after having drowned herself, and they conclude that she should be buried in Christian burial, because she was a young lady of quality. Then they maintain that labourers are the most ancient gentlemen upon earth, because they are of the same trade with Adam. 'But was Adam a gentleman?' says one of the grave-diggers. 'Yes,' answers the other, 'for he was the first that ever bore arms.' 'What, did he bear arms?' says the grave-digger. 'Without doubt,' says the other. 'Can a man till the ground without spades and pickaxes? He therefore bore arms; he was a gentleman.'

"In the midst of these fine harangues and the songs sung by these gentlemen in the parish church of the palace, arrives Prince Hamlet with one of his friends, and they contemplate the skulls found by the gravediggers. At last the skull of the King's jester is found, and it

is concluded that there is not any difference between the brain of Cæsar or Alexander and that of this jester. In fine, the grave is made whilst they thus dispute and sing. Holy water is brought by the priests; the body of Ophelia is brought on the stage. The King and Queen follow the bier; Laertes, in mourning, accompanies the corpse, and when it is laid in the ground, frantic with grief, he leaps into the grave. Hamlet, who remembers he had once loved Ophelia, leaps in likewise. Laertes, enraged at seeing in the same grave with him the person who had killed the chamberlain Polonius (taking him for a rat), flies in his face; they wrestle in the grave, and the King causes them to be parted, in order to preserve decency in the funeral ceremonies. In the meantime, King Claudius perceives that it is absolutely necessary to despatch such a dangerous madman as Prince Hamlet, and since that young prince had not been hanged in London, it is thought highly proper that he should be despatched in Denmark.

"The artful Claudius has recourse to the following stratagem. He was used to poisoning. 'Hark ye,' says he to young Laertes, 'Prince Hamlet has killed your father, my great chamberlain. That you may have it in your power to revenge yourself, I shall propose to you a little piece of chivalry; I will lay a wager with you that in twelve passes you will not hit Hamlet three times. You shall fence with him before the whole court. You shall have a sharp foil, the point of which I have dipped in a poison exceedingly subtle. If you, unluckily, should not be able to hit the Prince, I will take care to have a bottle of poisoned wine ready for him upon the table. People that fence must drink. Hamlet will drink, and one way or other must lose his life. Laertes thinks the expedient for amusement and revenge admirably devised. Hamlet accepts the challenge; bottles are placed upon the table: the two champions appear with foils in their hands, in the presence of the whole Danish Court. They fence; Laertes wounds Hamlet with his poisoned foil. Hamlet, finding himself wounded, cries out 'Treachery!' and in a rage tears the poisoned foil from Laertes, stabs him and stabs the King; Queen Gertrude, in a fright, drinks in order to recover herself; thus she is poisoned likewise, and all four—that is, King Claudius, Gertrude, Laertes, and Hamlet—die upon the stage.

"It is remarkable that an express just then arrives, that the two chamberlains who had sailed for England with the packet sealed with the great seal, had been despatched upon their landing. Thus there does not remain one person of the drama alive; but to supply the place of the deceased there is one Fortenbrass, a relation of the family, who had conquered Poland during the representation of the piece, and who comes at the conclusion of it to offer himself as a candidate for the throne of Denmark. This," concludes our commentator, "is the whole plan of the celebrated tragedy of *Hamlet*

—the masterpiece of the London Theatre! Such is the work that is preferred to *Cinna*!”

That the eighteenth century—a century renowned for its clever men, its accomplished women—could have been satisfied with so gross a travesty of so grand a drama, may well be thought astounding; but the solution may be found in the disposition of the age, whose type Voltaire may be considered.

The mind of the man who has been called “the perfection of mediocrity,” was alike common to the men and literature of the time. “Everywhere,” says a clever author, “you find wit, but little soul; much reason, little good sense; fine verses, no poetry; big words, and of conviction—none!”\*

The madness, whether actual or simulated, of the sad and lonely Hamlet, has puzzled far more thoughtful ages. The never-satisfied meditation on human destiny, and the dark perplexity of the events of the world which is there shadowed forth with so masterly a hand, could hardly find an echo in a period of levity and never-ending sarcasm. How should such a period have any sympathy for the most amiable of misanthropes? The quiet sensibility which yields to every motive, and is borne away by every breath of fancy, which is distracted in the multiplicity of its reflections, and lost in the uncertainty of its resolutions,” required a far more serious state of feeling to understand and grapple with it; and a being who was or imagined himself to be called upon by Heaven to accomplish a task of retribution, and who must therefore renounce every ordinary condition of affection and happiness—becoming a sort of sacred outlaw, was likely to find but little sympathy with men who only forgave to Rousseau the appearance and forms of conviction, because they were persuaded he had none of the reality.

His age, therefore, and not Voltaire, should be blamed, and we should probably agree with Carlyle that “it was not till the nineteenth century, whose speculative genius is a sort of living Hamlet, that the tragedy of *Hamlet* could find such wondering readers.”

C. E. MEETKERKE.

\* Hazlitt.



## BRITAIN'S COAL CELLARS.

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It would have been deemed a strange thought in the days of the Tudors, to suggest that England's greatness would one day depend,—or seem to depend,—on her stores of coal, a mineral then regarded as only an unpleasant rival of the wood log for household fires. When Shakespeare put into the mouth of Faulconbridge the words—

“ This England never did, nor never shall,  
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,  
But when it first did help to wound itself,”

he would have thought it a singular proviso that England should be watchful of her coal stores if she would preserve her position among the nations. And yet there is a closer connection between the present greatness of Britain and the mighty coal cellars underlying certain British counties than we are commonly prepared to acknowledge. Saxon steadiness and Norman energy have doubtless played their part in placing Britain in the position she now holds ; but whatever may have been the case in past ages of our history, it is certain that at present there is much truth in Liebig's assertion, that England's power is in her coal. The time may come again, as the time has been, when we shall be less dependent on our coal stores,—when bituminous bankruptcy will not be equivalent to national bankruptcy; but if all our coal mines were at this moment rendered unworkable, the power of England would receive a shock from which it would be ages in recovering.

I have quoted an assertion made many years since by Baron Liebig. The assertion was accompanied by another not less striking. “ Civilization,” he said, “ is the economy of power ; and English power is coal.” It is on this text that I propose now to comment. There has recently been issued a Blue Book, bearing in the most important manner on the subject of England's coal-supply. For five years fifteen eminent Commissioners have been engaged in examining the available evidence respecting the stores of coal contained in the various coal fields of Great Britain. Their inquiries were commenced soon after the time when the fears of the country on this subject were first seriously awakened ; and were directed specially to ascertain how far those fears were justified by the real circumstances of the case. It will be well to compare the various opinions which were expressed before the inquiries were commenced, with the results which have now been obtained.

In the first place it should be noticed that the subject had attracted the attention of men of science many years ago. Some forty years\* have passed since Dr. Buckland, in one of the Bridgewater Treatises, pointed to the necessity of a careful examination of our coal stores, lest England should drift unawares into what he called "bituminous bankruptcy." At that time the quantity of coal raised annually in England amounted to but about forty millions of tons. Ten years later the annual yield had risen to about fifty millions of tons; and then another warning voice was raised by Dr. Arnold. Ten more years passed, and the annual yield had increased to 88,685,214 tons, when Mr. Hull made the startling announcement that our coal stores would last us but about two centuries, unless some means were adopted to check the lavish expenditure of our black diamonds.

But it was undoubtedly the address of Sir W. Armstrong to the British Association, in 1868, which first roused the attention of the country to the importance of the subject. "The greatness of England," he said, "depends much upon the superiority of her coal, in cheapness and quality, over that of other nations. But we have already drawn from our choicest mines a far larger quantity of coal than has been raised in all other parts of the world put together; and the time is not remote when we shall have to encounter the disadvantages of increased cost of working and diminished value of produce." Then he summed up the state of the case as he viewed it. "The entire quantity of available coal existing in these islands has been calculated to amount to 80,000 millions of tons, which, at the present rate of consumption would be exhausted in 980 years; but with a continued yearly increase of 2½ millions of tons would only last 212 years."

\* So far back as 1789, John Williams, in his "Natural History of the Mineral Kingdom," discussed the question of the "Limited Quantity of Coal in Great Britain." The following extracts are taken from an excellent paper on the exhaustion of our coal in the *Popular Science Review* for July, 1866, by Mr. Lemoran, Colliery Viewer. "I have no doubt," says Williams, "that the generality of the inhabitants of Great Britain believe that our coal mines are inexhaustible; and the general conduct of the nation, so far as relates to this subject, seems to imply that this is held as an established fact. If it was not a generally received opinion, would the rage for exporting coals be allowed to go on without limitation or remorse? But it is full time that the public were undeceived in a matter which so nearly concerns the welfare of this flourishing island. . . . When our coal mines are exhausted, the prosperity and glory of this flourishing and fortunate island are at an end. Our cities and great towns must then become ruinous heaps for want of fuel, and our mines and manufactories must fail from the same cause, and then, consequently, our commerce must vanish. In short, the commerce, wealth, importance, glory, and happiness of Great Britain, will decay and gradually dwindle away to nothing, in proportion as our coal and other mines fail." Mr. Williams also solves in a very summary manner the problem of England's fate after her coal stores shall be exhausted. "The future inhabitants of this island must live," says he, "like its first inhabitants, by fishing and hunting."

Other statements were not wanting, however, which presented matters in a more favourable light. Mr. Hussey Vivian, M.P., expressed the opinion that South Wales alone could supply all England with coals for 500 years. Mr. R. C. Taylor, of the Geological Society, said that our coal stores would suffice for 1,700 years. And there were some who adopted a yet more sanguine view of our position.

On the other hand, Mr. Edward Hull, of the Geological Survey, calculated that with an increase of but one million and a half of tons per annum,—considerably less than even the average increase for the preceding decade,\*—our coals would last us but a little more than 800 years. Mr. Stanley Jevons, in his masterly treatise on “The Coal Question,” adopted a mode of considering the increase, which led to an even more unpleasant conclusion than any hitherto obtained. He observed that the quantity of coal raised in successive years is not merely increasing, but the amount of increase is itself increasing. “We, of course, regard not,” he said, “the average annual arithmetical increase of coal consumption between 1854 and 1863, which is 2,403,424 tons, but the average rate per cent. of increase, which is found by computation to be 3·26 per cent.” That is to say, for every hundred tons of coal consumed in one year, 103½ tons, or thereabouts, would be consumed in the next—taking one year with another. Without entering into technicalities, or niceties of calculation, it is easy to show the difference between this view of the matter and a view founded only on the average increase during so many years. Consider 10,000 tons of coal sold in one year, then Mr. Stanley Jevons points out that instead of that amount, 10,326 would be sold in the next; and so far we may suppose that the other view would agree with his. But in the next, or third year (always remembering, however, that we must take one year with another) the increase of 326 tons would not be merely doubled, according to Mr. Stanley Jevons; that is, the consumption would not be only 10,652 tons:—the 10,000 tons of the second year would be replaced by 10,326 tons in the third year, and the remaining 326 would be increased by 3½ tons for each hundred, or by rather more than 10½ tons; so that in all there would be 10,662½ tons, instead of 10,652. Now the difference in this third year seems small, though when it is applied to about nine thousand times 10,000 tons it is by no means small, amounting in fact to 95,000 tons; but when the principle is extended to sequent years its effects assume paramount importance. The small increase is as the small increase of a farthing for the second horse-shoe-nail in the well-known problem. The effects, after a few years have passed, correspond to the thousands of pounds by which the last shoe-nails of that problem increase the cost of the

\* In 1854, the yield was 64,661,401 tons; in 1864, the yield was 92,787,873: the average increase per annum was therefore no less than 2,812,647 tons.

horse. As Mr. Leonard Lemoran points out in the paper mentioned in the above note, if the assumed rate per cent. of increase continue, "we should draw in the year 1900 from our rocks more than 300 millions of tons, and in 1950 more than 2,000 millions.\* About 300,000 miners are now (1866) employed in raising rather more than 92 millions of coals; therefore more than eight million miners would be necessary to raise the quantity estimated as the produce of 1950. One-third of the present population of Great Britain would be coal miners." Or as Mr. Jevons himself sums up our future, "If our consumption of coal continue to multiply for 110 years at the same rate as hitherto, the total amount of coal consumed in the interval would be 100,000 millions of tons." Now as Mr. Hull estimated the available coal in Great Britain within a depth of 4,000 feet, at 83,000 millions of tons, it followed, that adopting Mr. Jevons's mode of calculation, a century would exhaust "all the coal in our present workings, as well as all the coal seams which may be found at a depth of 1500 feet below the deepest working in the kingdom." It should be added, however, that Mr. Stanley Jevons mentioned 200,000 millions of tons as the probable limit of the coal supplies of Great Britain.

The opinion of Mr. Jevons respecting the probable rate of increase of our consumption was not accepted by the generality of those who examined the subject in 1865 and 1866. There were some, indeed, who considered that the assumption was "absurd in every point of view." In one sense, indeed, Mr. Jevons himself would have been ready to admit that his estimates would not be justified by the result. The observed rate of increase could not possibly be maintained beyond a certain epoch, simply because there would not be enough men to work the coal mines to the extent required. But, regarding the increase as indicating the requirements of the kingdom, it would matter little whether the necessary supply failed for want of coal or for want of the means of raising the coal. In other words, removing the question from the arena of geological dispute, and considering only the requirements of the country, we should have this disagreeable conclusion forced upon us, if Mr. Jevons's estimate is just, that England will not be able, a century or even half a century hence, to get as many coals from her subterranean cellars as she will then require. She may have the coals, but she will not have men enough to bring them to bank.

It is, perhaps, in this aspect, that the question assumes its chief

\* I have obtained a somewhat different result from a computation I have just gone through. I make the consumption 291 millions in 1900, and 1446 millions in 1950. Mr. Lemoran seems to have taken the percentage at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  instead of  $3\frac{1}{4}$ . It is worth noticing how seriously a small change in the percentage affects the result; the consumption in 1950 becoming 1760 millions of tons instead of 1446 millions.

interest for us. Rightly understood, the statements of Mr. Jevons were of vital importance; so important, indeed, that the nation might have looked forward to the results of the Commission much as a patient would await the physician's report of the result of a stethoscopic examination. The power of the nation residing—for the nonce at least—in her coal, the enforced consumption of coal at a rate which cannot be maintained (from whatever cause), means to all intents and purposes the decline and approaching demise of England's power as a nation. Furthermore, apart from all inquiries such as the Commissioners undertook to make, the mere statement of the successive annual yields was to be looked upon as of vital interest, precisely as the progressive waste of a consumptive patient's strength and substance suggests even more serious apprehensions than the opinion of the physician.

I have said that many eminent authorities held that the rate of increase assumed by Mr. Jevons would not actually prevail. But some went farther, and questioned whether the average annual arithmetical increase of the lately passed years would continue even for the next few years after the publication of Mr. Jevons's work. "Such a continued increase as that which has taken place during the last five years," wrote an excellent practical authority, "cannot continue for the next ten years,"—far less, therefore, that increasing rate of increase which Mr. Jevons had assumed. The same writer went farther even than this. For, after pointing out that the exportation of coal would probably be soon reduced, rather than undergo, as during the past, a steady increase, he added that "on every side there were evidences of the most decided character, warranting the supposition that the annual exhaustion of our coal fields would not at any period much exceed the hundred million tons which it had nearly reached" (in 1866).

One of the most interesting questions, then, which the Commissioners were called upon to decide was, whether, at least during the period of their labours, the anticipations of Mr. Jevons would be fulfilled or not. It is easy to compare his anticipations with those above quoted; or, rather, it is easy to determine whether Mr. Jevons's theory of an increasing increase, or the theory of a uniform average increase, accords best with the experience of the last five years. To make the comparison fairly we must adopt the figures on which his own estimate was founded. We have seen that he rejected the annual increase of 2,403,424 deduced from the records of the nine preceding years, and adopted instead an increase of 3½ per cent. year by year, taking one year with another. His own calculations gave for this year 1871 a consumption of 118 millions of tons,—an enormous increase on the annual consumption when he wrote. According to the view he rejected, the consumption for the present year is easily computed, though slightly different results

will be obtained, according to the year we choose to count from. The annual increase above mentioned gives an increase of 24,084,240 tons in ten years, and if we add this amount to the consumption in 1861 (83,635,214 tons) we obtain for the current year a consumption of 107,669,454 tons. On the other hand, if we add eight years' increase to the consumption of 1863 (88,292,515 tons), we obtain 107,519,907 tons.\* It will be seen that there is an important difference between the consumption for 1871, as estimated according to Mr. Jevons's view, and according to the average rate of increase in the nine preceding years. As the matter stood in 1865, the great question concerning the consumption of the current year would have been,—whether it would be nearer 118 millions, the estimate of Mr. Jevons; or to 107½ millions, the estimate, according to the annual rate of increase; or, lastly, to a number of tons, not much, if at all exceeding 100 millions.

The answer of the Commissioners comes in no doubtful terms. Judging from the consumption during the four years ending in 1870, the estimated consumption for the current year is no less than 115 millions, an amount approaching Mr. Jevons's estimate much more nearly than could be desired. Indeed, if we consider the imperfect nature of the statistics on which he founded his calculations, the agreement between his estimate and the observed result must be regarded as surprisingly close. Remembering the conclusion to which Mr. Jevons came with respect to the period for which our coal stores would last, and noticing the close agreement thus far between his anticipations and the result, we can well understand the warning tone of the report issued by the Commissioners. "Every hypothesis," they say, "must be speculative, but it is certain that if the present rate of increase in the consumption of coal be indefinitely continued, even in an approximate degree, the progress towards the exhaustion of our coal will be very rapid." Let it be remembered that the Commission was issued at the instance of those who took the more sanguine view, and that it included within its ranks such eminent authorities as Sir William Armstrong, Sir Robert Murchison, Professor Ramsay, Mr. John Hunt, and others of like experience in the subject under inquiry.

If, in the next place we compare Mr. Jevons's estimate of the quantity of coal available for use with the result obtained by the Commissioners, we find little to restore our confidence in the extent of time during which our coal stores may be expected to last. We have seen that 200,000 millions of tons had been supposed to be available; but the Commissioners find that "we now have an aggregate of 146,480 millions of tons, which may be reasonably expected

\* The year 1863 was the last whose statistics were available for Mr. Jevons's purpose; and estimating from either 1860 or 1862 would give a result smaller than either of the above. Indeed, the consumption was less in 1862 than in 1861.

to be available for use." Again, it had been supposed that our coal mines could be worked to a depth of 4,000 feet, or to an even greater depth. "The difficulties in the way of deep mining," wrote Mr. Lemoran in 1866, "are mere questions of cost. It is important to notice that the assumption of 4,000 feet as the greatest depth to which coal can be worked, on account of the increase of temperature, is purely voluntary. The increase has been calculated at a rate for which there is no authority; and while we are saying our coal-beds cannot be worked below 4,000 feet, a colliery in Belgium has nearly approached that depth, and no inconvenience is experienced by the miners." But the Commissioners state that at a depth of only 2,419 feet in the Rosebridge mine (the deepest in England), the temperature is 94 degrees of Fahrenheit, or within four degrees of blood heat. "The depth at which the temperature of the earth would amount to blood heat," they add, "is about 3,000 feet." They express a belief that by the "long wall system" of working (a system as yet seldom adopted in the chief northern mines) it will be possible to reach a depth of 3,420 feet before this heat is attained; but it is by no means certain that this will prove to be the case.

On the other hand, it will be well to regard the more promising aspect of the question.

We must not forget, in the first place, that in all matters of statistical research there is room for misapprehension unless careful attention be paid, not merely to the observed facts, but to the circumstances with which those facts are more or less intimately associated. If we consider, for example, the progress of the consumption of our coal during the past fifteen years, we find that a law of increase exists, which is, as we have seen, easily expressed, and which, after being tested by a process resembling prediction, has been singularly confirmed by the result. But if we inquire into the various causes of the great increase in the consumption of coals, we find that while those causes have been increasing in activity—so to speak—to a degree quite sufficient to explain the observed consumption, they are yet such as in their very nature must needs be unable to pass beyond a certain range of increase. Thus the population of Great Britain has been steadily increasing, and at present the annual increase is itself increasing. Then the amount of coal used in inland communication is increasing, not only on account of the gradual extension of the railway network, but also on account of the increase of population, of commerce, and so on. Again, our commerce with other countries has increased with great rapidity since the year 1860, when the French treaty came into operation, and it will continue to increase with the increase of our population, of our means of communication within our own country as well as with foreign countries, and so on. But all these causes of increase are now growing in activity at a rate which must inevitably diminish. Our population cannot increase

beyond a certain extent, because the extent of the country will suffice for but a certain number of inhabitants. If emigration do not prevent increase beyond that number, other causes will, or else a much more serious evil than the exhaustion of all our coal stores awaits the country. Again, the requirements of inland communication will before long be so far met that no such rapid extension as is now in progress will be called for. After convenient communication has been established between all parts of the country—whether the process require the formation of new lines or of new services—no important increase can be required. As regards our commerce, its increase depends necessarily on the increase at present going on in the requirements of the country. Year by year Britain has a larger population, and the average requirements of each member of the population are also increasing. But we have seen that the increase of her population is necessarily limited; and, although, the increase of the requirements of her people may not be (strictly speaking) limited, yet it is manifest that, inasmuch as that increase depends on causes which are themselves approaching a limit, its rate must, after a time, continually diminish. Let it be understood that, when I speak of the requirements of the population, I do not mean only what they must obtain from other countries. The commerce of a country is the expression of the activity with which the nation is “earning its living,” so to speak, and in a given population there is a limit to what is necessary for this purpose, precisely as there is a limit to the sum which an individual person in any given state of life requires for the maintenance of a given family. Indeed, although such comparisons are not always safe, we may in this case compare what may be called the commercial requirements of the nation with the requirements of the head of a family,—a merchant suppose. There are no limits to the degree of wealth which a merchant may *desire* to gain, but unquestionably there are limits to the income necessary to maintain his house and family and mercantile position. Supposing he were extending his gains far beyond his actual requirements, it would by no means imply his approaching ruin that there was a demonstrable limit to this extension. And in like manner, it would seem that, apart from the limits set by nature to the extension of our population, it need by no means be assumed that if our commerce showed signs of approaching a limit, the downfall of England's power would be at hand.

In fact, we cannot accept Mr. Jevons's figures for distant epochs without first inquiring whether it is likely that at those epochs the circumstances on which the consumption of our coal depends will be correspondingly changed. Supposing that 120 millions of coals suffice for the requirements of our present population, we can scarcely believe that 1,440 millions will be needed in 1950, unless we suppose that the population of Britain will be twelve times greater than at



present; or that the population will be even greater than this, since the consumption of coals upon our railways could scarcely be expected to increase in proportion to the population. Now no one believes that Britain will number 800 millions of inhabitants in 1950, or in 2950; the country could not maintain half that number, even though all her available stores of coal and iron, and other sources of commercial wealth were increased a hundredfold.

It is a mistake, indeed, to extend the results of statistical research very far beyond the time to which the facts and figures belong. It would be easy to multiply instances of the incorrectness of such a process. To take a single case.—When cholera has been extending its ravages in this country, the statistics of mortality from that cause, if studied with reference to four or five successive weeks, have indicated a law of increase, which is very readily expressed so as to accord well with the mortality during those weeks, and perhaps two or three following weeks. But if such a law were extended indefinitely it might be found to imply nothing short of the complete desolation of the country by cholera, within the space of a few years. Thus, if the deaths (from cholera) in five successive weeks were 20, 27, 35, 47, and 63,—numbers corresponding with the general characteristics of cholera mortality in the earlier stages of a visitation,—the weekly mortality a year later, estimated according to the observed percentage of increase, would be more than 178 millions! Now this method of estimation, though leading to this preposterous conclusion as respects a more distant epoch, would probably lead to tolerably correct results for the next week or two after that in which 63 persons died,—the estimated numbers being 84 and 110 for the next two weeks respectively.

It seems to me, therefore, that we are not justified, by the observed seeming fulfilment of Mr. Jevons's anticipations, in concluding that a hundred years hence the consumption of coals will be 2,000 millions of tons, or that the total consumption during the next 110 years will be 100,000 millions of tons. We might almost as safely infer that because a growing lad requires such and such an increase of food year by year, the grown man will need a similar rate of increase, and the septuagenarian require so many hundredweights and gallons of solid and liquid food *per diem*.

At present it does not seem possible to arrive at any definite conclusions respecting the probable consumption of coal in years to come. The range of observation is not sufficiently extended. It seems clear, indeed, that the epoch is not near at hand when the present law of increase will be modified. This is shown by the agreement of the observed results during the past five years with the anticipations of Mr. Jevons. It would be altogether unsafe to predict that the yearly consumption will not rise to 150 or 200 or even 250 millions of tons per annum, or to point to any definite stage at which

the present increasing rate of increase will be changed first into uniform (or arithmetical) increase, and thence into a decreasing rate of increase. But it appears to me that no question can exist that these changes *will* take place. We might even go further, and regard it as all but certain that the time will come when there will be no annual increase. Nay, unless the history of this country is to differ from the history of all other nations which have attained to great power, the time might be expected to arrive when there will be, year by year, a slow diminution in the commercial activity of Britain, and a corresponding diminution in the exhaustion of her coal stores. There is room for an amazing increase in Britain's power and greatness, room also for an unprecedented continuance of these attributes, while yet the coal stores of the country remain well supplied.

Let us conceive, for instance, that the greatest annual consumption of coal during the future years of England's existence as a great nation, should be set at three times her present annual consumption, or at 350 millions of tons. Few will regard this as an unduly low estimate when they remember that it is exceedingly unlikely that the present population of Britain will ever be tripled, and that a triple population could be commercially far more active (in relation to its numbers) than the present population, with no greater consumption of coal per head. Now, to begin with, if this enormous annual consumption began immediately, we should yet (with Mr. Jevons's assumption as to the quantity of available coal) have 570 years' lease of power instead of 110. But, as a matter of fact, so soon as we have recognised the principle that there is a limit to the increase of annual consumption, we are compelled to believe that that limit will be approached by a much gentler gradient, so to speak, than the same consumption as attained on Mr. Jevons's assumption. According to his view, in fact, an annual consumption of 350 millions of tons per annum will be attained early in the twentieth century; but, according to the theory which sets such a consumption as the highest ever to be attained, we should place its attainment several hundreds of years later. This is a vague statement, I admit, but the very fact on which I am mainly insisting is this, that the evidence at present in our hands is insufficient as a basis of exact calculation. Now if we set 500 years hence as the time when the annual consumption of coal will have reached the above enormous amount, we should set the total consumption during those centuries at about one half that due to an annual consumption of 350 millions of tons. In that case there would still remain coal enough to supply the country for 320 years at the same tremendous rate. In all, on these suppositions, 820 years would be provided for. These would be years of commercial activity far exceeding that of our own day—in fact they would be years during which Britain would be accumulating wealth at a rate so enormous that at the end of the era she would be not wholly

unprovided with the means of supporting her existence as a nation, apart from all reference to her mineral stores. It is indeed utterly inconceivable, I think, that Great Britain and her people will ever be able to progress at the rate implied by these suggestions. To conceive of Great Britain as arriving at ruin within a thousand years by the over rapid exhaustion of her coal stores, is, in fact, equivalent to supposing that she will attain in the interval to a wholly unprecedented—I had almost said a wholly incredible—degree of height and power.

As regards the evidence which has been adduced respecting the extent of the available coal supply, it is to be remarked that, on the whole, the result cannot be regarded as unfavourable. The more sanguine views entertained five or six years hence have not indeed been fully justified. Yet our coal supply has been shown to be enormous, even when considered with reference to the continually increasing exhaustion.

But it must be admitted that the question of the depth to which our coal mines may be conveniently or even possibly worked, has an unpleasantly doubtful aspect. Of the stores which the Commissioners regard as available a vast proportion must be mined out from depths far exceeding any which have been at present reached in England. It is not as yet clear how far the increase of depth will add to the cost and risk of working; nor do I propose to discuss a subject which can only be adequately dealt with by those who possess practical knowledge of the details of colliery working. I will content myself by quoting some remarks on the subject, in an inaugural address delivered by Mr. George Elliot (one of the Royal Commissioners) before the North of England Institute of Mining Engineers in 1868. "The great depth," he remarked, "at which many of our pits are worked, and the vast extent of their lateral ramifications, make it more than ever necessary that we should secure the best mode of rendering the supply of pure air certain, regular, and safe. It is maintained that ventilating by machinery ensures these desiderata; that the nicety with which mechanical appliances may be regulated, the delicate adjustment of power of which they are capable, and the complete safety with which they may be worked, place them far before the system they are intended to supersede." The extent of our coal supply will be materially increased by the improvement of which this is a type. . . . It is probable that the ordinary means of ventilation—whether by furnace or fan—may be aided by a change in the force or agency employed for the purposes of haulage and other independent work. As an instance of my meaning, I may mention that the apparatus which I have introduced in South Wales, and which, by means of compressed air used as a motive power instead of steam, draws trams and pumps water with complete success, is found to generate ice in an atmosphere which is naturally hot and oppressive. The mechanical usefulness of these new air-

engines seems capable of indefinite extension; while as their cooling properties form a collateral advantage arising out of their use, it is at least possible that they may prove valuable auxiliaries to the more regular means of ventilation in extending the security and promoting the healthfulness of our mines. *The difficulties of ventilation once surmounted, the extent of coal at our disposal is incalculably increased.*"

In the address just quoted there are some striking suggestions as to the possibility of working those coal fields which extend below the sea on our east and west coasts, especially in the counties of Durham, Northumberland, and Cumberland. Mr. Elliot remarks that "for all practical purposes these fields are as entirely within the reach of the mining engineer as the ordinary workings out of which coal is hewed." It is known that in many districts the coal strata extend ten or twelve miles beyond the shore; and Mr. Elliot believes that by sinking ventilating shafts in the German Ocean the coal below may be safely worked. The idea seems somewhat daring; yet, after the feats of engineering which have been achieved in our day, there seems no valid reason for doubting that at least when the pressure of a failing coal supply begins to be felt, the means will be found for rendering these immense submarine coal stores available. As to the difficulty of transport, Mr. Elliot remarks that, according to his estimates, "transport would neither be more costly nor more laborious than it has been in days gone by to convey coal the same distance after it was brought to the surface inland." The enormous importance of the subject is shown by the fact that "out of the minerals obtainable in Durham alone, one-third," Mr. Elliot tells us, "may be held to lie under the sea, and that all coal fields having a similar inclination of strata, and bordering on the ocean, will be similarly enlarged. This at once disposes," he adds, "of some of the fears expressed as to the duration of our coal supply; and while I am quite aware that these theories may be challenged, they are not put forward without due deliberation, and I am content to stake my professional reputation on their practicability."

With regard to the future of this country, it appears to me that little anxiety need be entertained. Apart from the considerations I have urged, which seem to indicate that our consumption cannot long increase at the same rate as at present, it seems not unreasonable to anticipate that within the next few decades science will find the means of economising our coals in more ways than one. It does not indeed appear likely that any form of fuel will ever take the place of coal: but a portion of the work now derived from the consumption of coal, may be expected to be derived in future years from some of the other substances now coming into use. It may be hoped, also, that science may suggest means for bringing coals to the surface with less waste, and even at less cost, than at present. And in other ways the process of exhaustion may be more or less effectively checked.

But while we may thus look somewhat confidently forward, as I judge, to the future of our country, serious questions are suggested as to the future of the human race. The period during which a nation flourishes, long as it seems by comparison with the life of man, yet sinks into insignificance when compared with the period during which civilised men will bear sway upon the earth. The thousands of years during which the coal stores of the earth may be expected to last will pass away, and then the descendants of those now living on the earth will have to trust to other force supplies than those which we are now using so lavishly. It may seem fanciful to look so far forward, and yet by comparison with the periods which the astronomer deals with in considering the future of our earth, thousands of years are as nothing. As I have said elsewhere, "those thousands of years will pass as surely as the thousands which have already passed, and the wants entailed by wastefulness in our day will then be felt, and none the less that for so many years there had been no failure in the supplies contained within the great subterranean storehouse." It behoves us to consider thoughtfully the wants even of those distant eras. If the greatest good for the greatest number is to be regarded as the true rule for the conduct of intelligent beings, then unquestionably mere distance in point of time should not prevent us from anticipating the requirements of those remote descendants of ours. We should regard the consciousness of this duty and its performance as signs by which the superiority of our own over less civilised times is partly manifested. As man is in dignity higher than non-intelligent animals, in that he alone provides of his own forethought for the wants of his children, so our generation would be raised in dignity above preceding generations if it took intelligent charge of the wants of its remote descendants. We ourselves are now employing stores of force laid up for us by the unconscious processes of nature in long past ages. As Professor Tyndall has finely said, we are utilising the sun of the Carboniferous Epoch. The light "which streamed earthwards from the sun" was stored up for us by the unconscious activity of "organisms which living took into them the solar light, and by the consumption of its energy incessantly generated chemical forces." The vegetable world of that old epoch "constituted the reservoir in which the fugitive solar rays were fixed, suitably deposited, and rendered ready for useful application." What the vegetable world did for us unconsciously during the Carboniferous Epoch, the scientific world of our epoch must do for our remote descendants. While we are consuming the stores of force laid up in past ages for our benefit, we must invent the means for obtaining directly from the solar rays fresh and inexhaustible supplies of motive energy.

RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

## FEMALE CULTURE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

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MRS. GARRETT-ANDERSON, in urging the other day that men and women should be taught the same things, said that she wondered men had not prescribed a different diet to women from that which they prescribed to themselves. It might be answered that women have, in fact, of their own accord, practised habits of eating and drinking which have the effect of a diet unlike that of men. But the reader may be amused to see by the side of Mrs. Garrett-Anderson's illustration one of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's upon the same subject. It occurs in a letter, dated March 6th; 1758, to her daughter, the Countess of Bute; to whom, as is well known, she addressed some of the most sensible counsels upon the education of the young that have ever come from human pen—though they have all the hardness and narrowness of the time. The lady says, first: "The same characters are formed by the same lessons." This, however, could only be true if the recipient of the lessons were "a constant quantity." "This," she proceeds, "inclines me to think (if I dare say it) that nature has not placed us in an inferior rank to men, no more than the females of other animals, where we see no difference of capacity"—[? ?]—"though, I am persuaded, if there was a commonwealth of rational horses (as Doctor Swift has supposed), it would be an established maxim among them that a mare could *not* be taught to pace."

Not criticising this, let us, just by the way, pick out another passage from the same letter: "The unjust custom of debarring our sex from the advantage of learning" [arises in part from] "the men fancying that the improvement of our understandings would only furnish us with the more art to deceive them, which is directly contrary to the truth. *Fools* are always enterprising, not seeing the difficulties of deceit or the ill consequences of detection. . . . Earl Stanhope used to say during his ministry that he always imposed upon the foreign ministers by telling them the naked truth; when, as they thought it impossible that that should come from the mouth of a statesman, they never failed to write information to their respective courts directly contrary to the assurances he gave them." I have seen the maxim here in question attributed to Franklin; but it is older than even Earl Stanhope. Probably a hundred people have hit upon it without concert or derivation.

Turning the page in search of another passage about the education of women, which is, I find, too long to quote, I alight upon the

following striking touch—which, however, has only an indirect bearing on the culture of the times: “I return many thanks to Lord Bute for the china, which I am sure I shall be very fond of, though I have not yet seen it. I wish for three of Pinchbec’s watches, shagreen cases and enamelled dial-plates. When I left England they were five guineas each. You may imagine they are for presents; one for my doctor, who is exactly Parson Adams in another profession; the others for two priests, to whom I have some obligations.” These letters, the reader will remember, are dated from Louvère.

Turning now to the periodical literature for ladies of the same date, or a little later, we find exactly the same kind of claims made in behalf of women—claims, that is, for equality of faculty and position, and similarity of culture. The same kind of complaints as we have nowadays of the ordinary boarding-school culture. The same kind of proposals for an enlarged curriculum. The same kind of demands that girls should be taught cooking, dressmaking, and household economy. The same kind of criticism of certain small practices, such as “giving vails to servants;” and similar proposals for the training of skilled nurses. We also find a striking resemblance, in minor matters, to the modern lady’s magazine. Of course there are the fashions; but there are also the correspondents, who want recipes for “flushing,” red hands, the removal of superfluous hairs, the renewal of hair, the removal of what are stupidly called “worms” in the face, and all the rest of it. The papers on medical topics and the nursing of children are, apparently, much fuller than we see in our times, and the treatment of measles is very amply discussed. But not even “Liebig’s Malted Food Extract” for children is new, for we find a physician prescribing a sort of “panada,” with small beer in it. Then there are, just as nowadays, riddles of various kinds. There is an “enigmatical list of young lady’s (*sic*) at Horsham, Sussex;” and “an enigmatical list of gentlemen residing at Dartford, in Kent.” The use of the rod in education is one of the topics introduced; and it is unequivocally condemned—with regard to boys. The question of its use in bringing up girls is not raised, as it has been under our own very eyes of late.

There is in these magazines more coarseness of speech than we use in these times, and there is no distinction in this respect in favour of the ladies’ magazines as distinguished from the gentlemen’s—at least, I cannot discover anything of the kind. However, the moral tone generally is high. A lady who writes to inquire if she may safely marry a man who has hitherto kept a mistress, is advised by the *Minerva* of the magazine that such a man is not worth marrying. There is a plea “for making divorcees more easy and general.” The point of the following lies, of course, in the closing sentences about dress:—

## "TO THE MATRON.

"Dear Madam,—I have no patience with the men. I must, therefore, make an application to you. I have been talked to, admired, and complimented for my beauty these five years; but though I am just arrived to the age of nineteen, see not the smallest prospect of being settled—I declare I have almost lost all hopes, and am monstrously afraid I shall increase the catalogue of old maids. What a horrid idea! To make the matter a thousand times worse, I have had the galling mortification to see above half a dozen of my most intimate friends, the ugliest girls you can conceive, settled perfectly to their satisfaction.—I begin, indeed, to think there is nothing at all in beauty. What a deal of pains have I taken to improve my face and my shape! But if you cannot put me in a way to make something of myself after all, I will actually unfizzle my hair, throw my rouge into the fire, stuff a cushion with my bustle, press down my handkerchief to my bosom, and, in short, appear exactly as nature has made me: I am absolutely weary of taking so much trouble for nothing.—I wait for your answer with impatience—I am always in a hurry, but

"Your very humble servant,

"HARRIOTT HASTY."

In our own day we have heard of fine ladies who conceal large coarse ears with artificial hair, and wear small ones of gutta-percha, but "Harriot Hasty" does not appear to have got quite so far as that. There is a case reported in these magazines of a lady who was killed by over-painting, or enamelling; *i.e.*, from the constant choking up of the pores.

One peculiarity of this ladies' literature is the freedom with which men's persons and their dress are criticised. The following is a mild specimen:—

## "THE STUDIOUS SLOVEN.

"Philo, though young, to musing much inclin'd,  
A shameless sloven, in his gown had din'd;  
From table sneaking with a sheepish face,  
Before the circle was dismiss'd with grace,  
And smoaking now, his desk with books o'erspread,  
Thick clouds of incense roll around his head;  
His head, which save a quarter's growth of hair,  
His woollen cap long since scratched off, was bare:  
His beard, three days had grown, of golden hue,  
Black was his skirt, unseemly to the view;  
Cross-legged he sate, and his ungarter'd hose,  
Each meagre limb, half hide, and half expose:  
His cheek he lean'd upon his hand, below  
His nut-brown slipper hung upon his toe."

The ladies seem to have been especially offended by the exposure of the men's knees from the sliding up of the breeches above the stocking.

The musical pieces that are occasionally given are, as might be expected, very poor. But the news of the day, including the parliamentary intelligence, is most fully reported. The political references would be unintelligible to half the women of the present day. One is struck by the very large space occupied by the drama. Plays are



given at full length. In other cases we have a long account of the "new piece," with the prologue and epilogue, and the full "cast" of the characters. But private theatricals at a boarding-school are severely denounced, as likely to demoralise the young ladies.

The Girl of *that Period*—to adopt a slang expression—seems to have been not very unlike the Girl of *the Period*; at least, the following occurs in the "Lady's Intelligencer" department:—

"We are positively assured from the best authority, that a number of females of strict virtue, and unblemished reputation, have formed themselves into a committee in order to find out ways and means to stop the alarming progress of licentiousness in the female world, and to make all those fair ones ashamed of their conduct, who are not afraid, so great is their intrepidity, to expose themselves in the most public manner by the looseness of their behaviour: not only deviating widely from the line of decorum, but throwing themselves into the most indiscreet situations."

Nor, to employ another slang word, do women appear to have been less fond of "the sensational" then than they are now. See the following

#### "ADVERTISEMENT.

"For the entertainment of those ladies who are passionately fond of the terrible graces, and are particularly attached to those situations which put sensibility upon the rack, will be speedily published, in one volume Folio,

"A Collection of the most barbarous, bloody, and inhuman Murders—(Rapes included)—that ever were committed in any part of the known world: printed with red ink, that the pages may have a sanguinary appearance, and adorned with Cuts, in the most striking style; by the greatest masters, in their boldest manner:—published by Samuel Slaughter, near Butcher row."

Who can withhold a smile at the innocent syntax which *includes* "rapes" among "murders?"

Most of the literary matter appears to be contributed gratis, and the editor flatters and begs of his correspondents in the most abject manner. When the Lord George Gordon riots occur he is almost dignified, for once, in the notices

#### "TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

"We think it incumbent on us to declare, that the unsettled state of the metropolis during the late scenes of riot and anarchy, and the anxiety which our numerous correspondents in the country might feel for the safety of their friends in this capital, has obliged us to postpone the favours of several of our patronesses, which, though delayed, are decreed to be inserted. Permit us to add, that the matter pouring in upon us from all quarters relative to the late commotions will enable us to give a more explicit and more authentic detail of the legal proceedings against the rioters, either with respect to their commitments or their trials, than are, or can be given, in any other. We have not been at liberty, amidst the late numerous conflagrations, and scenes of devastation, to find out the particular month or year when the late Dr. Cook's receipt for *preventing the growth of superfluous hair*, was published; but, if E. G. will give us longer grace, we intend to satisfy her."

A very large quantity of the matter is translated from the French;

Rousseau, Voltaire, and, above all, Madame de Genlis, and the author (Berquin ?) of "*L'Ami des Enfants*," being laid under contribution:—

"We must beg leave to inform our friendly correspondent, *Henrietta R*—, that our store is entirely exhausted, and request her to send us a recruit early in the month.

"The translator of *Rousseau's Emilie* [*sic*] will excuse us for taking the liberty of desiring either an immediate supply, an apology for the *suspension*, or leave to continue the remainder of the work ourselves, as it was always our principle to *gratify*, not to *torture* curiosity."

The following is noticeable, but it will convey a very feeble impression to the reader who does not happen to know the sort of advertisement that in those times did actually find its way into periodicals:—

"Our *Friend and good Customer*, will be pleased to advert, that the advertisements complained of are never inserted even in a *corner* of the Magazine: though sometimes a proposal in that line is stitched up with the Magazine, which may easily be taken out and destroyed (by the purchaser) if not agreeable."

In spite of the place which some of the contributors claimed for cookery in female education, the editor is terribly indignant at being asked a question about melted butter:—

"With respect to the frequent requests received from *Bessy Bluit* on the *important* subject of *melting butter without flour*, &c., we must refer her either to her *own cook*, or to those which are employed in the genteel houses and taverns of her own place of residence, or those of the *hotels* in the metropolis: but in answer to her menace of troubling us with a letter every *week*, tho' our Magazine is published only once a *month*, we will favour her with an extract which we have received on account of her importunities, and which, were it not for her threatenings, we intended to have suppressed. The author, after expressing her surprize on the *Queries respecting melted butter*, proceeds thus—"I was angry, and thought it an affront even to ask such a question. Did the lady suppose you made *cooking* your study? She need not wait a month for an answer; I suppose any good cook would have informed her. Her last letter, pardon me, does her and her sex no honour. With respect to her child, had she applied to any physician, he could have told her how far *melted butter* might affect her or her child, &c."

One peculiarity of this literature remains to be noticed. Love-correspondence, with scarcely any disguise as to names, was freely admitted, in the form of verse. The following is a very mild sample in point:—

"To MR. P—.

"On his neglecting a very amiable young Lady for the Author.

"Why thus ungenerously disown

That —, the fairest girl in town,

Can't fix your roving heart;

That heart which she so justly claims,

For which she burns with mutual flames,

And you've returned in part.

"If fame says true, there's none so fair,

Possess of charms to banish care,

In virtue's garb array'd,

Minerva deigns her handmaid be,  
Reason approves her wise decree,  
Nor can a fault descry.

"If you this female disregard,  
Think not another takes your word,  
Nor dare presume to hope  
That every fair who lends an ear  
To what the fickle P—— declares  
Will not that faithless doubt.

"ANNA L—— G——."

In numerous cases the addresses of the persons concerned are given, with only the suppression of a few letters.

I have reserved to the last what I think the tit-bit of my little collection—which could, of course, be made much larger. Before me lies

"A short treatise upon arts and sciences, in French and English, by Question and Answer. The ninth edition, revised and carefully corrected. A Work very useful to those who desire to improve themselves in the *French Tongue*, and containing a great Variety of Subjects. By John Palairet, French Master to their Royal Highnesses the Duke, the Princess Mary, and the Princess Louisa. London, printed for F. Wingrave, successor to Mr. Nourse, in the Strand. MDCXCII."

When this tutor of royal princesses comes to treat of poetry he surpasses himself. The following is his specimen of the sonnet:—

"SONNET.

"As Phillis, undress'd, in a sweet summer's night,  
Was walking alone, and the meadow adorning,  
All nature, amaz'd at so pleasing a sight,  
Took her for Aurora, and thought it was morning.

"The earth pour'd out flowers to delight the fair queen,  
To salute her, the birds in a concert conspire,  
And the stars, her bright eyes when once they had seen,  
O'ercome by their lustre, began to retire.

"Phœbus, resolving these faults to amend,  
New harness'd his horses, new painted each ray,  
But when he survey'd her, asham'd to contend,  
To Thetis return'd, and left her to give day."

The Tutor closes the subject by putting into the mouth of the royal catechumen the following stupendous dictum:—

"Q. *Is poetry a useful study?*

"A. Every body likes it, it is true, and the greatest wits have always given their mind entirely up to it. But notwithstanding that, it is, in my opinion, the most unprofitable of all the studies, and the fittest to render incapable of any other study those that apply themselves to it."

Waiter, clear away! An analysis of the dominant ideas in the culture of those times would occupy many pages—and the reader must be allowed time to digest this truly "royal" answer.

HENRY HOLBEACH.

## PATIENTIA.

---

TOM on, O troubled brain,  
With anxious thoughts and busy scenes oppress;  
Ere long release shall reach thee. A brief pain!  
Then—Rest!

Watch still, O heavy eyes,  
A little longer must ye vigil keep;  
And lo! your lids shall close at morning's rise  
In sleep.

Throb yet, O aching heart,  
Still pulse the flagging current without cease;—  
When you a few hours more have played your part,  
Comes Peace!

Bear up then, weary soul!  
Short is the path remaining to be trod—  
Lay down the fleshly shroud, and touch the goal—  
Then—God!

TOM HOOD.

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## A SONNET.

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“Abierunt ad plures.”

---

LIKE some poor shipwrecked mariner I stand;  
Weak, wounded, weary; by the ocean thrown  
Upon a rock, far out of sight of land,  
With billows closing-in on every hand.  
My friends are going,—I am left alone;  
My life is being swallowed-up by graves,  
And day by day my earth has narrower grown  
Before the spread of those green churchyard-waves  
Yet is my trust in Thee, O Lord, the more,  
Knowing Thou garnerest this love for me;  
And evermore my storm-worn spirit craves  
The blissful land where there is no more sea,  
Knowing full well, that on that happy shore  
The love Thou hast absorbed, Thou wilt tenfold restore.

TOM HOOD.

## HANNAH.

*A Novel.*

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

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### CHAPTER XIII.

LADY DUNSMORE was a shrewd and far-seeing woman. She responded with the utmost civility to all Miss Bertha Rivers's advances, and planned no end of gaieties for her and Hannah, from which the Rivers family might plainly see—and she meant them to see—that she desired her friend Miss Thelluson's visit to be made as pleasant as possible.

But fate and Hannah's own will stood in the way. Adeline declined more rapidly than any one expected; and it soon became evident that she was never likely to quit those dull lodgings in Harley Street, except to be taken back to Easterham in the one peaceful way;—as however far off they died, it had always been the custom to carry home all the Riverses. Even Adeline herself seemed to understand this.

"I don't want to stir from here—it is too much trouble," she said one day to Hannah, now daily beside her. "But, afterwards, tell them they may take me home. Not to the Grange—that never was home—but to the Moat-House. Let them have me one night in the drawing-room there, before they put me under the daisies. And let Bernard read the service over me. And—you may tell him and them all, that I was not sorry to die—I did not mind it—I felt so tired!"

Nevertheless

"On some fond breast the parting soul relies,"

And that breast was for Adeline, not her husband's, but Hannah's. Of any one else's nursing she testified such impatience—perhaps feeling instinctively that it was given more out of duty than love—that gradually both Mr. Melville and Bertha let her have her own way. Things ended in Miss Thelluson's spending most of her time, not in the Dunsmores' lively mansion, but in that dull drawing-room, from whence, except to her bed-room, Adeline was never moved.

"Do stay with her as much as you can," entreated Bernard, who ran up for a day to London as often as he could, but who still saw no more than brothers usually see, the mere outside of his sister's life. He knew she was doomed; but, then, the doctors had

said Adeline was consumptive, and not likely to live to be old. "And she has had a happy life, married to the good fellow whom she was always fond of. Poor Adeline! And she has grown so much attached to you, Hannah. She says you are such a comfort to her."

"I think I have rather a faculty for comforting sick people: perhaps because doing so comforts me."

But Hannah did not say—where was the use of saying?—that this comfort was to her not unneeded. The uncertainty of her present position; the daily self-suppression it entailed—nay, the daily hypocrisy, or what to her honest nature felt like such,—were so painful, that sometimes when Bernard appeared, she did not know whether she were glad or sorry to see him. But everybody else—even to the Dunsmores—seemed heartily glad. And no one seemed to have the slightest suspicion of any bond between Rosie's aunt and Rosie's father except little Rosie. Sometimes this was to her a relief—sometimes an inexpressible pain.

"Good-bye, and God bless you for all your goodness to my sister," said Bernard one Saturday as he was going back to Easterham. "They will all bless you one of these days," added he tenderly,—all he could say, for he and she were not alone. They seldom were alone now. Opportunities were so difficult to make, and when made, the fear of being broken in upon in their tête-à-têtes caused them to feel awkward and uncomfortable—at least, Hannah did.

"Good-bye," she responded, with a sad, inward smile at the phrase "one of these days." Did it mean when they should be married? But that day might never come, or come when they were quite elderly people, and hope deferred had drained their hearts dry of all but the merest dregs of love. And the picture of the woman who might have been Bernard's wife, happy and honoured, accepted by his family, welcomed by his neighbours, reigning joyfully at the House on the Hill, and finally succeeding to the Moat-House, to be there all that a Lady Rivers should be—presented itself bitterly to Hannah's imagination. She had taken from him the chance of all this, and more, and given him in return—what? A poor, weary heart, which, though it was bursting with love, could not utter more than that cold "good-bye."

But when she had said it and returned to Adeline's bedside, Hannah forgot the troubles of life in the solemnity of fast-advancing death.

"It is hard Bernard is obliged to go," the sick girl said pitifully. "He likes to sit with me a little, I can see that. *They* do not; and therefore I don't want to have them. Besides, I can't have one of them without having both; and I won't have both. Nobody could expect it."

"No," said Hannah, feeling sorrowfully that it was useless to argue

against what had grown almost into a monomania, though the poor sick girl had still self-control enough not to betray herself, except in incidental, half-intelligible words like these. Better leave it thus, and let her sorrow die with her—one of the heart-wounds which nobody avenges; one of the thefts for which nobody is punished.

At length, just in the middle of the London season, when, one summer morning, Mayfair lay in the passing lull between the closing of opera and theatres, and the breaking-up of late balls, a cab thundered up to the Earl of Dunsmore's door. It was Mr. Melville coming to fetch Miss Thelluson to his wife. She was dying.

And then Hannah found out that the young man had some feeling. Full of strength and health himself, he had never really believed in Adeline's illness, still less her approaching death, till now; and it came upon him with a shock indescribable. Overwhelmed with grief, and something not unlike remorse, during the twelve hours she still lingered he never quitted her side. Careless as he had been to his living wife, to a wife really dying he was the tenderest husband in the world. So much so, that she once turned to Hannah with a piteous face—

"Oh, if this could only last! Couldn't you make me well again?"

But she could not be made well again; and—it might not have lasted—this late happiness which gave her peace in dying. Poor Adeline! it was better to die. And when Hannah watched the big fellow, now utterly subdued by the emotion of the hour, insist upon feeding his wife with every mouthful of her last food, as tenderly as if she were a baby,—sit supporting her on the bed, motionless for hours, till his limbs were all cramped and stiff—sadder than ever seemed the blind folly, perhaps begun in a mistake on both sides, which had ended in letting a poor heart first starve for love, and then grow poisoned with a nameless jealousy, until between the hunger and the poison it died.

For Adeline did die: but her death was peaceful, and it was in her husband's arms.

"He is fond of me, after all, you see," she whispered to Hannah in one of Herbert's momentary absences. "It was very foolish of me to be so jealous of Bertha. Perhaps I should not, had it been a thing I could have spoken about. And don't speak of it now, please. Only if he ever wants to do as his father did, and the law will allow it, tell him he may as well marry Bertha as anybody;—I shall not mind."

But to Bertha herself, although she kissed her in token of amity and farewell, Adeline said not a word. The secret wound, vainly plaistered over, seemed to bleed even though she was dying.

Her end had come so suddenly at last, that no one from Easterham had been sent for, and when Bernard arrived next morning at his accustomed hour, it was to find a shut-up house and his sister

"away." Then, in the shock of his first grief, Hannah found out, as she had never done before, how close, even with all their faults, was the tie which bound him to his own people. It touched her deeply—it made her love him better, and honour him more; and yet it frightened her. For there might come a time when he had to choose, deliberately and decisively, between the love of kindred and the love of her; and she foresaw, now more clearly than ever, how hard the struggle would be.

In the absorption of her close attendance upon Adeline, she had heard little of what was going on in the outside world. Even "the bill"—the constant subject of discussion at Dunsmore House—had faded out of her mind; till such phrases as "read the first time," "read the second time," "very satisfactory majority," and so on, met her ear. Once they would have been mere meaningless forms of speech, now she listened intently, and tried hard to understand. She did understand so far as to learn that there was every probability this session of the bill's passing the Commons, and being carried up to the House of Lords, where, upon a certain night, a certain number of noblemen, some biassed one way or other by party motives, and a proportion voting quite carelessly, without any strong feeling at all in the matter, would decide her happiness and Bernard's for life.

It was a crisis so hard, a suspense so terrible, that perhaps it was as well this grief came to dull it a little. Not entirely. Even amidst his sorrow for his sister, Hannah could detect a nervous restlessness in Mr. Rivers's every movement; every day, too, he sought eagerly for the newspaper, and often his hands actually trembled as he took it up and turned at once to the parliamentary notices. But he never said one word to Hannah, nor she to him; indeed, this time, they were never alone at all.

Adeline was to be buried at home, and Mr. Melville begged that Hannah would accompany Bertha, and take her place, with his wife's sisters and his own, at the funeral. Lady Rivers, in a note, asked the same; adding a cordial invitation that she should stay at the Moat-House. Hannah looked at Bernard.

"Yes, go," he said; "I wish it. They are very grateful to you for your goodness to her. And I want you," he continued in a low tone, "to try to be one of us—which you may be before very long."

This was all; but Hannah felt forced to obey, even though it cost her the first parting from her child. Only a three-days' parting however; and Bernard seemed so glad that she should go.

She, too, as she sat with the other three mourners—one in each corner of the silent railway carriage—and watched the soft rain falling on the fields and reddening hedges, under which, here and there, appeared a dot of yellow—an early primrose—she was conscious in her heart of a throb of hope responding to the pulses of the spring; and, once suddenly looking up at Bernard, she fancied he felt it too.



It was nature, human nature; and human passion, suppressed but never crushed, waking out of its long sleep, and crying unto God to bless it with a little happiness—even as He blesses the reviving earth with the beauty of the spring.

Miss Thelluson's welcome at the Moat-House, mournful as it was, was kind; for they had all been touched by her kindness to the dead, and sorrow strikes the tenderest chord in every heart. She had never liked Bernard's people so well, or been drawn to them so much, as during that quiet evening when poor Adeline's coffin rested a night under the Moat-House roof; or the day after, when with all the family she followed it to its last resting-place.

It was a curious sensation. To stand as one of them—these Riverses, whom she loved not, at best merely liked—well aware how little they had ever liked her, and how ignorant they were of the tie which bound her to them. Guiltless as she knew herself to be, she was not without a painful feeling of deception, that jarred terribly upon her proud and candid spirit. She scarcely said a word to Bernard, until he whispered, "Do speak to me now and then, or they will think it so strange." But even then her words were formal and few.

She had meant to leave on the third day, for she yearned to be back with her darling; but fate came between. Sir Austin, long an invalid, and almost a nonentity in the family, passed, the night after his daughter's funeral, suddenly and unawares, into the silent dignity of death. When Hannah came down next morning, it was to find the Moat-House plunged once more into that decent, decorous affliction which was all that could be expected of them under the circumstances.

They begged her to stay a little longer, and she stayed. There was a good deal to be done, and the ladies soon found out how well Miss Thelluson could do it. Also, not being a relative, she could see the visitors, and retail to the family the wide-spread sympathy expressed for it at Easterham, and for many miles round. "You are such a comfort to us," they said; and Bernard, whom his father's death seemed to affect more deeply than Hannah had expected, said, in his entreating eyes, "You are such a comfort to me." So, what could she do but stay?

A few days more, and the Rivers vault was again opened; and Miss Thelluson stood beside it, with all the Rivers family, except the new Sir Austin, of whom nobody spoke, except the Easterham lawyer, who lamented confidentially to Hannah that Mr. Rivers should be kept out of his title, though it could not be for more than a few years. The hapless elder brother, whose mind grew weaker and weaker every day, though his body was strong enough, might at any time have some fit that would carry him off, and prevent his being an encumbrance longer.

"And then," whispered the lawyer, "Mr. Rivers will be Sir Bernard; and what a fine position he will hold! one of the finest

in the county. What a pity he has no heir—only an heiress! But of course he will now marry immediately. Indeed, he owes it to his family."

Hannah listened, as she was now learning to listen—teaching her poor, mobile, conscious face the hardness of marble. Her heart, too, if possible; for these torments, so far from lessening, would increase day by day. How she should ever bear them? She sometimes did not know.

The family had just come out of the study, where the will had been read, and were settling down to that strange quiet evening known in most households, when, the dead having been taken away and buried out of sight, the living, with an awful sense of relief as well as of loss, try to return to their old ways—eat, drink, and talk as usual. But it was in vain; and after a silent dinner, Bernard went back to the examination of papers in the study. Thence he presently sent a message for help.

"I suppose that means Miss Thelluson," said Bertha with a half laugh, which Lady Rivers gravely extinguished.

"Go, my dear. I daresay your brother-in-law finds you more useful to him than any one else." So Hannah went.

Bernard was sitting—his head in his hands. It was a white, woe-begone face that he lifted up to Hannah.

"Thank you for coming. I thought perhaps you might. I wanted comfort."

Hannah said a few commonplace but gentle words.

"Oh no, it is not that. I am not sorry my poor old father is away. It was his time to go. And for me, there will be one less to fight against, one less to wound."

He said the latter words half inaudibly—evidently not meaning her to hear, but she did, at least some of them. A wild, bitter answer came to her lips, but this was not the time to utter it. She merely replied by an offer of help, and sat down to fulfil it. He showed her what to do, and they went on working silently together for nearly half an hour.

But the extremes of human emotion are not so far apart as they seem. Keen and real as the young man's grief was, he was a young man still, and when the woman he loved sat beside him, with her sweet grave look, and her calm, still manner, another passion than grief began to stir within him.

"Hannah," he cried, seizing her hand, "are you happy, or miserable—as I am? or, which seems most likely, have you no feeling at all?"

She looked up. It was not a face of stone.

"Put your work away—what does it matter? Talk to me, Hannah. Think how long it is since you and I have had a quiet word together."

"Can I help that?"

"No,—nor I. We are both of us victims—tied and bound victims in the hands of fate. Sometimes I think she will get the better of us, and we shall both perish miserably."

"That is a very melancholy view to take of things," said Hannah, half smiling. "Let us hope it is not quite true."

"My bright, brave-hearted woman! If I had you always beside me, I should not go down. It is being alone that sinks a man to despair. Still, suspense is very hard."

And then he told her what she had not been before aware of,—that the bill had safely passed the House of Commons; that Lord Dunsmore and other peers, a rather strong party, hoped even in the House of Lords; which had hitherto always thrown it out, to get this year a sufficient majority to carry it through and make it the law of the land.

"And then, Hannah, we can be married—married immediately."

He gasped rather than uttered the words. Passion resisted had conquered him with double force.

"But—your own people?"

"They like you now—appreciate you, even as Lady Dunsmore does." (He did not see, and Hannah had not the heart to suggest, that perhaps it was in consequence of that appreciation.) "Besides, whether or not, they must consent. They cannot go against me. My father has left everything in my hands. I am, to all intents and purposes, the head of the family. It is that which makes me so anxious. Should the bill not pass—But it shall pass!" he cried impetuously, "and then no power on earth shall prevent me from marrying the woman I choose—and that is you!"

"Strange, strange!" murmured Hannah, half to herself, and dropped her conscious face, and felt more like a girl than she had done for many years. For she had no duties to think of; her child was away, there was only her lover beside her. Her lover, wooing her with a reality of love, a persistent earnestness, that no woman could either question or mistake.

"You are not quite colourless, I see, my white lily. You will not always shrink back when I want to take you to my heart? You will creep in there some day, and make it feel warm again, instead of cold and empty and lonely, as it is now. Hannah, how soon, supposing the bill passes this month, how soon will you let me marry you?"

They were standing together by the fire, and Bernard had just put his arm round her. She turned towards him, she could not help it; it was so sweet to be thus loved. Hand in hand, and eye to eye, they stood for the moment, yielding to present joy and future hope, absorbed in one another, thinking of nothing beyond themselves, seeing and hearing nothing, when the door opened, and Lady Rivers stood right in front of them.

"Good heavens!" she exclaimed, and started back as if she had trod on a snake.

They started back, too—these guilty-innocent lovers. Instinctively they started back from one another; and then Bernard recovered himself.

Vexatious as the crisis was—though he looked as if he would have cut off his hand rather than have had it happen—still, now that it had happened, he was too much of a man not to meet it—too much of a gentleman not to know how to meet it decorously. He moved back again to Hannah's side and took her hand.

"Well, Lady Rivers, had you anything to say to me?"

"Well, Bernard Rivers, and what have you to say for yourself? And what has this—this young woman—to say for herself, I should like to know?"

"If you mean Miss Thelluson, her answer is as brief as my own must be. It is now many months since she promised to be my wife as soon as our marriage can be lawfully carried out. In the meantime we are friends, close friends; and, as you may have observed, we also consider ourselves engaged lovers. Hannah, do not distress yourself; there is no need.

And in the face of his step-mother he put his protecting arm round her—she was trembling violently—and drew her head on his shoulder.

There are some people whom to master you must take by storm. Hold your own and they will let you have it; perhaps even respect you the more; but show the slightest symptom of weakness, and they will trample you into the dust. Bernard knew perfectly well with whom he had to deal, and took his measures accordingly.

Lady Rivers—utterly astounded, less perhaps by the fact itself, than by the cool way in which Bernard had taken its discovery, simply stood and stared.

"I never knew anything so dreadful; never in all my life. Excuse my intrusion. The only thing I can do is to leave you immediately."

She turned and quitted the room, shutting the door after her. Then, left alone with him, Hannah sobbed out her bitter humiliation upon Bernard's breast.

He comforted her as well as he could, saying that this must have happened some day; perhaps it was as well it should happen now; and that he did not much care. Still it was evident he did care; that he was considerably annoyed.

"Of course, it increases our perplexities much; for our secret is no longer our own. In her wrath and indignation, she will blab it out to the whole community; unless indeed family pride ties her tongue. But, anyhow, we cannot help ourselves; we must brave it out. Come with me, Hannah."

"Where?"

"Into the next room, to face them all and tell the exact truth. Otherwise we may be overburthened with any quantity of lies. Come, my dear one. You are not afraid?"

"No." She had had all along a vague doubt that when it came to the point he would be ashamed of her and of his love for her. To find that he was not, gave Hannah such comfort that she felt as if she could have walked barefoot over red-hot plough-shares, like some slandered woman of the Middle Ages, if only she might find at the end of her terrible march Bernard's face looking at her as it looked now.

"Yes," she said, "I will come with you at once; for what is told must be told quickly. I cannot stay another night in this house."

"You must, I fear," answered Bernard, gently. "Where would you go to? Not to mine?"

"Oh no, no, I can never go to your house any more."

And the cruel penalties of their position, the chains which bound them on all sides, began to be felt by both in a manner neither had ever felt before. To Hannah it seemed as if she were actually treading between those fiery plough-shares, and she could not have steadied her steps, but for Bernard's supporting hand.

She held to him, literally with the clinging grasp of a child, as they passed across the hall to where, in the fine old drawing-room, like a conclave of the Inquisition, the whole family were assembled.

Lady Rivers had evidently been explaining what she had just heard and seen. Astonishment was upon every face, and but for one accidental circumstance, the presence of Herbert Melville, there might have been a stronger feeling yet: But indecorum being the greatest dread, and prudence the principal characteristic of the Riverses, they were obliged to restrain their wrath within the natural limits of an offended family which has just discovered that one of its members has made a matrimonial engagement without telling them anything about it. Even Lady Rivers, with her widowed son-in-law standing by, was forced more than once to pause and alter her form of speech, dilating more on the wicked secrecy with which Bernard had planned his marriage, than the sort of marriage he was about to make.

When the two culprits walked in, looking agitated enough, but still not exactly like culprits, she stopped—

"Let them speak for themselves, if they have the face to do it," cried she, dropping down in her chair exhausted with vituperation. And then his sisters rushed to Bernard—some angry, some in tears—asking him how he could ever think of doing such a dreadful thing; with his father not yet cold in his grave—their poor, poor father, who would have shuddered at the thought of such a marriage.

It was a hard strait for a man to be in. That he felt it as acutely as so tender a heart could possibly feel, was plain. He turned deadly

pale; but still he never let go of Hannah's hand. She—for a moment she thought of breaking from him and flying out of the house—anywhere—to the world's end—that she might save him from her and her fatal love. Then a wise resolution came—the determination since he had chosen her, to stand by him to the last. By her child, too, for one implied both. Thinking of little Rosie, she was strong again; for no sense of guilt enfeebled her; all she was conscious of was misery—pure misery; and that was at least bearable. She sat down in the chair where Bernard had placed her, still holding him fast by the hand; the only being she had to hold to in the wide world now.

"Sisters," said he at last, speaking very quietly, but as firmly as he could, "what your mother has just found out I intended to have kept back from you till the law made my marriage possible. I knew how you would feel about it—as I felt myself once; but people's minds change."

"So it appears," said Lady Rivers, with a loud sneer. "Especially after living in the same house together—for months and months."

"Especially after living in the same house together—as you say," repeated Bernard, deliberately, though his cheek flamed furiously. "Living in a relation close enough to give us every opportunity of finding out one another's character, and of wishing the tie should be made closer still. I did not love her at first; not for a long time; but once loving her, I love her for ever. What I do—I beg you all to understand—is done not hastily, but deliberately. Long before I ever said a word otherwise than brotherly to Miss Thelluson, or she had any suspicion of what my feelings were, my mind was made up. I shall marry her if I can, believing that both for my own sake and my child's, it is the wisest second marriage I could make—and the most natural."

"Marry her! after living together as brother and sister—or whatever you choose to call it," cried Mrs. Morecamb. "Thomas, dear, did you ever hear of anything so shocking—so improper?"

"The law did not hold it improper," answered Bernard, in extreme irritation. "And as I tell you—at first we had no idea of such a thing. It came upon me unawares. The law should not have placed me in such a position. But it will be broken soon, I trust. And until then you may all rest satisfied; Miss Thelluson will never again enter my house until she enters it as my wife. Then, sisters, whether you like her or not, you must pay her the respect due to a brother's wife, or else I am your brother no longer."

He had taken a high tone—it was wisest; but now he broke down a little. In that familiar home, with the familiar faces round him—two out of them just missing, and for ever—it was hard to go against them all. And when—the gentlemen having prudently stepped out

of the room—the women began sobbing and crying, lamenting over the terrible misfortune which had fallen on the family, things went very sore against Bernard.

“And supposing the bill you talk of does not pass, and you cannot carry out this most unnatural, most indecent marriage,” said Lady Rivers; “may I ask what you mean to do? To go abroad, and get married there? as I hear some people do; though afterwards, of course, they are never received in society again? Or, since ladies who can do such unlady-like things must have very easy consciences, perhaps Miss Thelluson will excuse your omitting the ceremony altogether.”

Bernard sprang up furious. “If you had not been my father’s wife, and my father only this day buried, you and I should never have exchanged another word as long as I lived. As it is, Lady Rivers, say one word more—one word against her—and you will find out how a man feels who sees the woman he loves insulted—even by his own relations. Sisters!” he turned to them, almost entreatingly, as if in his natural flesh and blood he might hope to find some sympathy. “Sisters, just hear me.”

But they all turned away, including Bertha, whom poor Adeline had judged rightly as a mere coquette; and who evidently was not at all anxious that brothers-in-law, however convenient to flirt with, should be allowed to marry their deceased wives’ sisters. She stood aloof, a pattern of propriety, beside the rest; and even made some sharp, ill-natured remark concerning Hannah, which Hannah heard, and lifted up reproachful eyes to the women whom she had been helping and comforting, and feeling affectionately too, all week, but who now held themselves apart from her, as if she had been the wickedest creature living.

“You know that is untrue, Bertha. I was perfectly sincere in every word I uttered; but, as Mr. Rivers says, people’s feelings change. I did not care for him in the least then—but I do now. And if he holds fast by me, I will hold fast by him, in spite of you all.”

Slowly, even mournfully, she said this; less like a confession of love than a confession of faith—the troth-plight which, being a righteous one, no human being has a right to break. They stood together—these two, terribly sad and painfully agitated, but still firm in their united strength—stood and faced their enemies.

For enemies, the bitterest any man can have,—those of his own household—undoubtedly Bernard’s sisters and their mother now were. It seemed hardly credible that this was the same family who only a few hours ago, had wept together over the same open grave, and comforted one another in the same house of mourning. Now, out of that house, all solemnity, all tenderness, had departed; and it became a house full of rancour, heart-burning, and strife.

Long the battle raged, and it was a very sore one. A family fight always must be. The combatants know so well each other's weak points. They can plant arrows between the joints of the armour, and inflict wounds from behind; wounds which take years to heal—if ever healed at all. Hannah could hardly have believed that any persons really attached to one another, as these were, could have said to one another so many bitter things within so short a time. Such untrue things also, or such startling travesties of truth; such alterations of facts and misinterpretations of motives, that she sometimes stood aghast and wondered if she had not altogether deceived herself as to right and wrong; and whether she were not the erring wretch they made her out to be. Only her—not him; they loved him; evidently they looked upon him as the innocent victim to her arts—the fly in the spider's web, glad of any generous kindred hand that would come and tear it down, and set him free. Unfortunate Bernard!

He bore it all for a good while—not, perhaps, seeing the whole drift of their arguments—till some chance speech opened his eyes. Then his man's pride rose up at once. He walked across the hearth, and once more took hold of Hannah's hand.

"You may say what you like about me; but if you say one word against her here, you shall repent it all your lives. Now, this must end. I have heard all you have to say, and answered it. Sisters, look here. You may talk as much as you like, seeing you are my sisters, for ten minutes more,"—and he laid his watch on the table, with that curious mixture of authority and good humour which used to make them say Bernard could do anything with anybody. "After that, you must stop. Every man's patience has its limits. I am the head of the house, and can marry whomsoever I choose; and I choose to marry Miss Thelluson, if I have to wait years and years. So, girls, you may as well make up your minds to it. Otherwise, when she is Lady Rivers—as one day she may be—you would find it a little awkward."

He half smiled as he spoke; perhaps he knew them well enough to feel sure that the practical, rather than the sentimental, side was the safest to take them on; perhaps, also, he felt that a smile was better than a furious word or a tear—and both were not far off, for his heart was tender as well as wroth; but the plan answered.

Lady Rivers gave the signal to retire. "For this night, Miss Thelluson, I suppose you will be glad to accept the shelter of our roof; but perhaps you may find it not inconvenient to leave us to-morrow. Until that desirable event, which Bernard seems so sure of, does take place, you will see at once that with my unmarried daughter still under my charge——"

"It will be impossible for you to keep up any acquaintance with me," continued Hannah, calmly. "I quite understand. This good-night will be a permanent good-bye to you all."



Lady Rivers bowed. But she was a prudent woman. It was a perfectly polite bow—as of a lady who was acting not so much of her own volition as from the painful pressure of circumstances.

Hannah rose, and tried to stand without shaking. Her heart was very full. The sense of shame or disgrace was not there;—how could it be, with her conscience clear, and Bernard beside her?—but bitter regret was. She had been with his people so much of late, that sorrow had drawn them closer to her than she had ever believed possible. Likewise, they were his people, and she still tried to believe in the proverb that “blood is thicker than water.”

“I have done you no harm—not one of you,” she said, almost appealingly. “Nor your brother neither. I only loved him. If we are ever married, I shall devote my life to him; if not, it is I that shall suffer. In any case, my life is sad enough. Do not be hard upon me, you that are all so happy.”

And she half extended her hand.

But no one took it. Neither mother nor sisters gave one kind word to this motherless, sisterless woman, whom they knew perfectly well had done nothing wrong—only something foolish. But the foolishness of this world is sometimes higher than its wisdom.

“Good night,” said Bernard; “good night, my dearest. You will find me waiting at the railway at eight o’clock to-morrow morning, to take you direct to Lady Dunsmore’s.”

With a chivalrous tenderness, worthy of his old crusading ancestors—those good knights, pledged to heaven to succour the distressed—he took Hannah by the rejected hand, kissed it before them all, led her to the door, and, closing it upon her, went back to his mother and sisters.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

It was the dreariest of wet March mornings, more like winter than spring—when they met at the station—those two, whom, if all the eyes of Easterham had been on them, no one would ever have taken for lovers, so grave, so sad, so silent were they. The only attention Bernard paid to her was the common courtesy of any gentleman to a lady—any kind-hearted man to a suffering woman. For that Hannah did suffer, was plain. To rise in the dull dawn of the morning, to breakfast alone, and steal away, unnoticed and uncared-for by any member of the family, was outward humiliation enough; but it was nothing to the inward pain. No wonder that her eyes were heavy and sleepless, her face deadly white, and that even the village doctor whom they met on the platform noticed how very ill Miss Thelluson was looking.

“Yes, she was my sister’s constant nurse, and has been helping

us here through all our trouble," said Bernard, hastily. "She is very much worn out; and I am glad to be taking her back at once to her friend Lady Dunsmore."

Hannah recognised the prudence, and was grateful. Yet still, that there should be this vital need for prudence, for circumspection, for worldly wisdom, was itself a kind of mute di grace.

The doctor travelled up with them to London; so they had not one word together—Bernard and she—till they found themselves alone in the cab. Then he seized her hand.

"We have but five minutes, my love. Always my love! Remember that; and for my sake forgive all."

"I have nothing to forgive. Thinking as they do, they could scarcely act otherwise than as they do. But, oh, it is hard. I was growing so fond of Easterham—of them too. And now I shall never see the Moat-House or them again."

"Do not be too sure of that," said Bernard, passionately. "You may be back again ere many weeks. Back—in a character in which they must receive you."

And then he explained how he had seen in the day's newspapers that the bill was to be brought up to the House of Lords for the second reading that very night.

"The critical night. Lord Dunsmore has been expecting it for long. There will be a debate; still, I know, he hoped for a majority—small, indeed, but enough to carry it through—enough to save us. Oh, Hannah, if it were right to pray for such a thing—such a common secular thing as a few votes more or less in Parliament—I, a clergyman too."

He laughed; but his eye glittered with excitement. Hannah was almost frightened when she looked at him.

"I am glad the suspense will be ended to-night," he continued. "You see, the trial is harder for me than for most—though, I believe, by Lord Dunsmore's account, that there are hundreds of men in England in my position—waiting till the bill shall pass. But then I am a 'city set on a hill'—like my house, as you used to say to me. A clergyman, contemplating an act which is directly contrary to the canon law, and in which my very bishop—I understand—is dead against me. I shall be excommunicated, of course—that is, suspended—except, by-the-bye, if my marriage ever takes place, it will be according to law; and, then, whatever he thinks, the bishop cannot suspend me. Oh, we care quite as much for the law as the gospel, we clergymen!"

And he laughed again, and still continued rapidly talking in a way very unusual with him. Evidently the trial was becoming past his endurance; and now that there was added the home-warfare—to which he never referred—things would be worse still. Suffering, they say, often changes a woman into an angel; but it is not so

with men—generally quite the contrary. Hannah was so grieved that she hardly answered a word till they reached their destination.

“Stop a minute!” Bernard said. “I had meant to leave you here—and go——”

“Where?”

“Anywhere; it does not matter. But I cannot do it. Oh, Hannah, keep me beside you! I am good then. Could you not invent some nice little falsehood for my staying?”

“Does it need a falsehood to excuse a father’s coming to see his own child?” said Hannah, gravely.

“The child—always the child!” he cried. “You care for nobody else. I do believe you are marrying me—if ever we are married—solely for the sake of the child.”

Hannah paused a minute before she answered. His conversation was not exactly true, yet there was some truth in it; and to deny truth is always dangerous. She laid her hand on his very tenderly—the tenderness of a love so baptised in sorrow that almost all earthly passion had been washed out of it.

“Bernard, if what you say were true—I do not allow that it is—but if it were, would it be a wicked thing? Would Rosie’s mother, or need Rosie’s father, be angry with me for it?”

“No, no!” And for the hundredth time, looking at the saintly patience of her face—a face in which, besides love, were written grief, and loss, and resignation—he learnt patience too.

Lady Dunsmore had gone out, and might not be home till dinner-time; but had left a note for Miss Thelluson, in case she returned to-day, which the Countess seemed to have expected.

“Why? Does she guess anything, do you suppose?”

“Everything, I believe,” said Hannah. “But she has never breathed one syllable to me, and never will.”

“Good, wise, generous woman! We must tell her all to-morrow.”

But Hannah only sighed. She had little faith in “to-morrow.” People whose lives have been very sunless gradually cease to believe in the sun.

It was a long, long day. They could hardly have got through it but for the child, who with her little imperative queenliness put aside both past and future, and compelled them to live in the present. Desperately in love as he was, Mr. Rivers had a father’s heart, and the mother-heart in Hannah kept it alive. Also after the domestic storms of the Moat-House there was something in the innocent peace of the baby-life—so absorbed in little things—which soothed them both. Men might have laughed, but angels would have smiled, to see these two forlorn lovers, who dared not show their love, to whom one another’s presence was always a painful restraint—often an actual dread—comforting one another a little in their mutual love of the child.

Lady Dunsmore smiled, too, when she saw them building houses of cards for Rosie on the nursery floor, and then blowing them down with the solemnest of faces; but after the smile she turned away with a tear. She had a heart—this brilliant little woman of the world.

Kissing Hannah, she said a few words of gentle condolence to Mr. Rivers.

"I did not wonder that Miss Thelluson was kept at the Moat-House, she is such a help to everybody in trouble; but I am glad you have brought her back now, and glad you have come to see your little girl. She would have forgotten papa soon. You will stay and dine? We have no guests, for Lord Dunsmore will be at the House. He speaks to-night, if the Marriage Bill comes on for the second reading, as we expect it will."

Bernard made some brief assent.

"See what it is to be a politician's wife," said the countess, turning to Hannah. "All this forenoon I have been acting as amateur whipper-in to get votes for our side. Lord Dunsmore is desperately anxious about it, but very hopeful of the result. He will come straight home with the news; so I shall be most grateful of your company, Mr. Rivers, to congratulate my husband, if he wins—to condole if he fails. But as I said to my thane this morning, when I counselled him to go and murder, not King Law, but the tyrant Injustice—

'Screw your courage to the sticking place  
And we'll not fail.'"

She put the matter thus, with her consummate tact and delicate kindness, chattering gaily on, and not waiting for anybody to answer. And all day she kept them up with her gay, witty, continuous talk—a perpetual fountain of prettiness—never by word or look betraying that she guessed anything, that anybody had any anxiety except herself, for the result which this day must bring.

At dinner they were only three; but in the evening one or two people dropped in. Lord Dunsmore's house was always a sort of rendezvous to discuss what was going on in the House, especially when there was pending such a question as this, in which he was known to be strongly interested. His wife, too—her enemies called her a female politician; but even they acknowledged that she pursued her unfeminine *métier* in a most womanly way, and that it was chiefly for her lord's sake, in whose projects she joined heart and soul.

"No," she said, when all the comers and goers had left, and she sat waiting for Lord Dunsmore's return, trying in every way to make the time slip by for those other two, to whom she talked fast, but scarcely looked at them. "No; I hate the word party; I despise heartily those politicians who dare not think for themselves, but must vote as their leader bids them, just as much as I despise those feeble

legislators who, as in this case, are afraid to do good, lest evil might come—to break a bad law, lest good laws might some day be broken. If I were a man, the only question I should ever ask myself would be—is this right or wrong? That once clear, I would risk the rest.”

“Would you?” cried Bernard, leaning forward, strongly excited. He had looked very ill all day—indeed he had owned to Hannah that he was not well, and that before he went home he meant to consult a doctor; but he had the true masculine dislike to be pitied and sympathised with in his ailments, so she asked no more; only she watched him—his changing cheek, his nervous start at every opening of the door, with an anxiety she could not control.

And, as during a pause in his conversation with Lady Dunsmore he turned and asked Hannah rather irritably “why she was so silent?” he little knew what a desperate resolve was forming in her mind, should certain combinations of circumstances force her to it—drive her into the carrying out of that principle, “All for love, and the world well lost.” A resolve which no one would have expected possible for such a quiet woman as she.

Ten o'clock struck—eleven; it was near midnight.

“They are having a long debate; that looks well for our cause,” said Lady Dunsmore; and then a carriage was heard to drive up, and Lord Dunsmore's foot—he was a large, heavy, ponderous man, not easily moved, physically or mentally, but firm as a rock after he did move—was distinctly audible coming up-stairs.

His little bright wife flew to him. “Oh, tell us—I mean, tell me—in two words——”

But he had caught sight of the other two, and looked for the moment as if he wished himself miles and miles away. Still he went up and shook hands with them with a noble affectation of carelessness.

“Pardon. Lady Dunsmore is so anxious about me and my affairs. Well, my dear, there is, unluckily, no news. We have failed this time—beaten; but by the smallest majority yet. Hope on, hope ever! Next session we shall have converted those heretics, and be sure to get our bill through. If we fight on steadily we shall carry our point at last.”

“Of course we shall,” cried the Countess, with a choke in her throat. “No need to be downhearted. The right always wins. Cheer up, Dunsmore!”

And she patted him on the shoulder, never once turning her eyes—they glittered with tears, in spite of her gay tone—to the two behind her.

Hannah stood motionless. She had expected nothing, and was scarcely disappointed; but Bernard stepped forward excitedly.

“Yes, yes, the right always wins. And you made a brilliant speech, Lord Dunsmore. I—I—con—grat——”

An uncomfortable sound rose in his throat, as if he were struggling to articulate, and could not. Then he dropped down, and there was the piteous sight of a strong man swooning dead away. Hannah, as she fell on her knees beside him, and lifted his head, thought for the instant it was real death.

"It has killed him," she said piteously. "He could not bear it—the suspense, I mean; and now—You understand?"

"Yes, I have understood it all along," said Lady Dunsmore gently, and bade her husband lock the door, so as to prevent any one entering for a minute or two. "We will see after him ourselves. Look, he is reviving a little already!"

Bernard sighed. "Oh, Hannah!" he murmured, and stretched out his arms. She opened hers and took him into them, resting his head against her shoulder, so that he could breathe freer, then looked up to her two friends.

"You see how it is? We could not help it. And you do not think us wrong, I know."

"Wrong! Quite the contrary. And I always knew it would happen. Didn't I tell you so?"

That one little triumph—"I told you so!" The Countess could not resist it; but after that she said no more—only helped Hannah, in the kindest and tenderest way, to restore the still half-conscious man. Bernard's illness, however, seemed rather more than an ordinary fainting-fit. When he recovered he wandered in his talk, and scarcely seemed to know where he was.

Then Hannah took at once the motherly part which seems natural to almost all women in cases of sickness—soothing him, tending him, and accepting for him all the arrangements which Lady Dunsmore immediately made, that he should remain in the house. Soon he was able to be half led, half carried, to his room.

"Is it all right, Hannah? You will see that it is all right?" said he, helplessly, and when she answered him in her quieting voice he seemed satisfied, and submitted patiently.

But she had to submit to harder things. When, hearing him call her, she mechanically rose to follow him, Lady Dunsmore detained her.

"Not you; my old housekeeper must be his nurse. Not you."

"But he wants me. He called me."

"Never mind. You cannot go. What would the world say?"

Hannah blushed horribly, then answered in a low, desperate voice, "I care nothing for the world. He is mine. You forget we are engaged; we were to have been married as soon as ever the law allowed. Nobody understands him as I do. Let me go."

"No," said her friend firmly. "He will be taken every care of; but your care he cannot have. For both your sakes, I will not allow it; the world is too wicked. And yet," she added, "the world has common sense on its side. No man or woman, not related, ought

to have been to one another what you and he have been, unless they could be married. You must accept things as they are. I am not cruel to you, but kind."

Hannah knew that. With a stolid patience she did accept her lot, submitting day after day, for a whole week, to the miserable suspense of only hearing second-hand tidings of Bernard's state, of having rights and no rights, of being neither wife nor sister, yet having to endure the agonizing anxiety of both. Not alone, either, in her pain—for Bernard continually sent messages for her to come to him, and Lady Dunsmore would not let her go.

"Cæsar's wife," she said, "must not even be suspected. You are under my protection, and I will protect you to the utmost of my power; but you must also protect yourself. You must give no handle to the bitter tongues which are already beginning to wag about you."

What tongues, she did not state; but Hannah knew. By the manner in which she had often heard other people talked of at the Moat-House, she guessed well enough how the Moat-House would now be talking of her. And the plan which, in the wretchedness of being parted from him, she had already matured, and intended to propose to Bernard as soon as he got well—namely, that, adhering to the letter of the law, and risking all misinterpretation, she should go back with him to Easterham, and resume her place as his sister and housekeeper—faded into thin air.

"You are right," said the Countess, when they discussed, as they did openly now, the actual position of things, and what was the best course to take next. "Such a scheme would never do. The world would never believe in you or him. I can quite understand a woman, conscious of her own innocence, doing the most daring things; but there are things which she has no right to dare. No, my poor Hannah, if ever you are married, you must bring to your husband a spotless name; not a soul must be able to throw a stone at you. And there are those who would stone you to death if they could."

"I know that," said Hannah, sadly; "but perhaps they do not mean it. Don't tell *him*; he loves them."

So spoke she, and tried to believe the best—that circumstances were chiefly in fault, not individuals. But Lady Dunsmore was very angry, especially when, the ill-tidings about Bernard being necessarily sent to Easterham, Bertha and Mrs. Morecamb rushed up, and bemoaned him, and exacted a promise from him that he would come home directly, and let himself be nursed at the Moat-House by his own people. That day he did not ask for Hannah—not once.

She sat in her room, and saw nothing of him—saw almost nobody, except the child. She was painfully aware that every person in the house, servants included, guessed her exact position with regard to Mr. Rivers, and watched her with the eager curiosity with which

almost all people, good and bad alike, follow a domestic tragedy of this sort—a something which cannot be talked of openly, which has all the delightfulness of sin without its dangerous elements.

Thus, when Mr. Rivers at last came down to the drawing-room, Celestine, the Countess's maid, ran into Miss Thelluson's room with the substance of half-a-dozen French novels written in her face, to communicate the event; assuring mademoiselle that monsieur was looking so much better than anybody expected, and she had heard him asking for her; and should she arrange mademoiselle's toilette to the best advantage before she went down-stairs?

But, when really summoned, Hannah crept rather than walked to her lover's presence. There was no joy, no eagerness in her face—only a kind of dreamy thankfulness—until they were alone together, and then he called her to his side.

“Hannah, it was not of your own will that you forsook me?”

“No, no!”

“And you love me still? You will not give me up even after what has befallen us? You understand? For another year, at least, there is no hope of our being married.”

“No.”

“Isn't it sad and strange—sad and strange?” he continued wistfully, as he lay on the sofa, she holding his hand, for he was very feeble still. “Here are we two, with every blessing under heaven—youth, health, freedom, money—nothing in the world to prevent our being happy; and yet, happy we cannot be. I see no way out of it. Do you?”

For a minute he looked as if he thought she might; but she shook her head, and kept her eyes down on the ground.

“Then the question is, what are we to do? I must go home directly, but it must be without you. Lady Dunsmore tells me so, and I think she is right.”

“I think so, too.”

“And parting from you, I must also part from my child. You know I promised you I would never claim the child, and I shall keep my word, though I shall miss her sorely. Pretty little Rosie! Still, I will give her up—to you.”

“Thank you.”

And then, looking at him, the thanks seemed cruel—he was so worn, so weak, so joyless; and it was such a joyless, empty life that he was going back to. He was so helpless, too—the kind of man who always wants a woman to take care of him—to whom marriage is, domestically, not merely a comfort but a necessity; and all his little weaknesses she knew—all his innocent wants she was accustomed to supply.

“Oh, you don't know how I have missed you!” said he, with an almost child-like complaining. “Home has not been like home since



you went away. There was nobody to do anything for me, or when they did it, they did it wrong. Nobody like Hannah. When shall I have you back again?"

"When indeed?"

"And now, when I was ill—when, once or twice, I thought I was dying, and could not get at you—it was so hard. Will you promise"—he lifted himself up, and clutched her hand tight—"promise faithfully that, if I am really dying, you will come to me, whatever the world says?"

"I will;" and he saw by her face that she would. "But you must not die," she added desperately; "you must get well as fast as ever you can. You must take the utmost possible care of yourself, for Rosie's sake—and mine. Oh, Bernard! once I told you to part from me and go and marry another woman, but I could not do it now."

He smiled, and tried to draw her closer to him; but she glanced at the door, and shrank away.

"You don't care for me—you are afraid of caring for me," Bernard said angrily.

"I! not care for you!"

She wept; and, overcome by the weakness of illness, he wept too. It was cruelly hard for them both—as hard as that most pathetic line in the ballad—

"We took but ae kiss, and we tore oursels away."

But that "ae kiss" of theirs had no sin in it—nothing but sorrow.

"Hannah," implored he, "do not forsake me again. "If you knew what a lost creature I am without you—to die without you, or to live without you, is equally dreadful. Can nothing be done? Oh, my dearest! can nothing be done?"

His eyes were so sad, his looks so wan. Even this comparatively trifling illness, following the long mental strain which he must have undergone, had broken him down so completely that Hannah was terrified. There came upon her that mortal dread, which comes upon all who love, and was most natural in her, who had lived to see the grave close over all her nearest and dearest. What if, among all their cares, the one care they never contemplated were to happen? What if Bernard were to fall into ill-health, to sicken and die, and she still parted from him? What if, instead of the long lonely years which both had feared so much, there should be allotted to one of them only a brief space of earthly life; was that space to be spent in separation? Would it not be better to clench at the vanishing joy—to risk all things, and gain one another?

Under the agony of this fear Hannah was near giving way, and whispering a word or two—offering that fatal sacrifice, which, however he needs it and craves it, no woman has a right to make to any man, not even though it may be one which, as in this case, involves no moral guilt, and concerning which her own conscience may be at

ease entirely. For the sacrifice is not hers alone. He too is involved in it. Nor he only; but the solemn rights of creatures yet unborn—innocent beings who cannot plead and say, “Father, mother, why did you do this? why entail this misery upon us also?”

Whether, noble and pure woman as she was, the motherly heart in Hannah made her faintly hear those voices, with a solemn prevision that no woman ought ever to blush for or to set aside—who knows?—but she hesitated. She could not be the first to propose that marriage abroad which secured nothing at home. Besides, so long as the law was the law, it ought not to be broken.

While she hesitated, Bernard, who had lain silent and thoughtful, said suddenly, in a rather changed tone—the “worldly” tone which she had sometimes remarked in him, the faint reflex of what was so strong in the rest of his family:—

“Perhaps, after all, my going back to my parish work alone, will be the most prudent course; for I may soon have to make some change in it, and indeed in all my outward surroundings. The girls told me that poor Austin has had another series of fits, worse than ever before. Most likely I shall be Sir Bernard before very long.”

He sighed—but it was not a heart-deep sigh; one could not expect it to be; and there was something in his look which corresponded to that tone which always jarred upon Hannah. No, “all for love, and the world well lost,” was not the creed of any Rivers; if Bernard tried it, the loss would not be by him quite unfelt. Would it by any man, brought up as he had been, and with the nobler half of him never developed at all, till he fell in love with poor Rosa—till he afterwards walked into love, deeply, deliberately, with such a woman as Hannah Thelluson?

Hannah left her passionate words unsaid, and continued their grave and anxious talk—listening to all the plans he made for her and Rosie, in which he showed the utmost thoughtfulness and tenderness. The most likely scheme, and one which Lady Dunsmore had herself suggested, was that, as the young Ladies Dacre were going to the sea-side for a little, Hannah should accompany them, or rather *chaperone* them, taking with her Rosie and Grace. This would be a quiet life, and yet not a life quite shut out of the world. No one could say she was “hiding.”

“For you must not hide,” Bernard argued; “we must not look as if we were ashamed of ourselves. And you must be somewhere where I can get at you—run down to see my child, of course, whenever it is practicable. Still, you are best a little out of the way too, and not going much into society, for the thing is sure to ooze out.”

“How?”

“Oh, though my people pledged me to secrecy ‘for the honour of the family,’ I know what women’s tongues are,” said Bernard, bitterly. “Still they dare not say or do much, seeing I shall be Sir Bernard some time; and then— But however things end, I had

rather, whatever may be the curiosity of the world about you, that it was not gratified; but that you lived a rather secluded life. It is best, especially considering how you stand with respect to my family."

"I comprehend you. Yes."

"Oh, Hannah, have I said anything to wound you? But I am placed as it were between two fires. What can I do?"

"Nothing. Nor I. Fate is too much for us; we had better say good-bye for a time. Give me the child and let me go."

And at the moment she felt as if she did not care where she went, or what was done to her. It was all pain; nothing but pain. In her sad life all its natural delights seemed turned into bitterness.

Bernard seized her hands—"Tell me the whole truth. Tell me all that is in your mind about me, or against me—which is it?"

Another minute and she might have said, not at all the tender words that a while ago she had meant to say, but others quite opposite—words which might have placed an eternal barrier between her and the man she loved; who after all was only looking upon their position with a man's eyes—always harder and more worldly than a woman's.

But to save her the door opened, and there burst in with a cry of delight, her Rosie—her "sunshiny child," as she often called her. The little thing, who had been with her papa every day for the last week, climbed upon him in an ecstasy, then turned to Hannah.

"Tannie too, Tannie too! Papa and Tannie kiss Rosie. Both together!"

It was going back to the old ways; childhood and age are alike in clinging to old ways and resisting the smallest change.

"You see," said Bernard, with a smile, "Rosie herself insists upon things being as they used to be—as they ought to be. Rosie herself delights in us 'both together.'"

Hannah said nothing; but, clasping her darling, she laid her weight of secret pain upon the unconscious, childish bosom which was already the receptacle and the comfort of half her woes.

"I will go anywhere, and do anything that you and Lady Dunsmore think best, if I may only have Rosie with me. She'll come, I know?" And Hannah curled round her fingers the soft little ring of silky hair—baby hair which had never been cut, and which netted in its dainty meshes all her motherly heart. "Who loves poor Tannie? Who's Tannie's darling?"

"No; papa's darling," said the child with a pretty waywardness, and then relenting, came and laid her head in her aunt's lap, repeating words which Hannah had forgotten ever having said to her, only she often murmured her soul out over the little crib at night; and Rosie's observation was growing so sharp, and her memory so clear. "No; papa's darling; Tannie's blessing!" Then with a little silvery mischievous laugh, "Blessed tild! Rosie blessed tild!"

Ay, she was a blessed child.

# SAINT PAULS.

DECEMBER, 1871.

## WILFRID CUMBERMEDE.

*An Autobiographical Story.*

BY GEORGE MACDONALD, AUTHOR OF "ALEX FORBES," ETC.

### CHAPTER LV.

#### ATTEMPTS AND COINCIDENCES.

It was months before I could resume my work. Not until Charley's absence was as it were so far established and accepted that hope had begun to assert itself against memory; that is, not until the form of Charley ceased to wander with despairful visage behind me and began to rise amongst the silvery mists before me, was I able to invent once more, or even to guide the pen with certainty over the paper. The moment however that I took the pen in my hand another necessity seized me.

Although Mary had hardly been out of my thoughts, I had heard no word of her since her brother's death. I dared not write to her father or mother after the way the former had behaved to me, and I shrunk from approaching Mary with a word that might suggest a desire to intrude the thoughts of myself upon the sacredness of her grief. Why should she think of me? Sorrow has ever something of a divine majesty, before which one must draw nigh with bowed head and bated breath:

Here I and sorrows sit;  
Here is my throne: bid kings come bow to it.

But the moment I took the pen in my hand to write, an almost agonizing desire to speak to her laid hold of me. I dared not yet write to her, but, after reflection, resolved to send her some verses which should make her think of both Charley and myself, through the pages of a magazine which I knew she read.

O look not on the heart I bring—  
 It is too low and poor ;  
 I would not have thee love a thing  
 Which I can ill endure.

Nor love me for the sake of what  
 I would be if I could ;  
 O'er peaks as o'er the marshy flat,  
 Still soars the sky of good.

See, love, afar, the heavenly man  
 The will of God would make ;  
 The thing I must be when I can,  
 Love now, for faith's dear sake.

But when I had finished the lines, I found the expression had fallen so far short of what I had in my feeling, that I could not rest satisfied with such an attempt at communication. I walked up and down the room thinking of the awful theories regarding the state of mind at death in which Mary had been trained. As to the mere suicide, love ever finds refuge in presumed madness ; but all of her school believed that at the moment of dissolution the fate is eternally fixed either for bliss or woe, determined by the one or the other of two vaguely defined attitudes of the mental being towards certain propositions ; concerning which attitudes they were at least right in asserting that no man could of himself assume the safe one. The thought became unendurable that Mary should believe that Charley was damned—and that for ever and ever. I must and would write to her, come of it what might. That my Charley, whose suicide came of misery that the painful flutterings of his half-born wings would not bear him aloft into the empyrean, should appear to my Athanasia lost in an abyss of irrecoverable woe ; that she should think of God as sending forth his spirit to sustain endless wickedness for endless torture ;—it was too frightful. As I wrote, the fire burned and burned, and I ended only from despair of utterance. Not a word can I now recall of what I wrote :—the strength of my feelings must have paralyzed the grasp of my memory. All I can recollect is that I closed with the expression of a passionate hope that the God who had made me and my Charley to love each other, would somewhere, some day, somehow, when each was grown stronger and purer, give us once more to each other. In that hope alone, I said, was it possible for me to live. By return of post, I received the following—

“SIR,

“After having everlastingly ruined one of my children, body and soul, for *your* sophisms will hardly alter the decrees of divine justice, —once more you lay your snares—now to drag my sole remaining child into the same abyss of perdition. Such wickedness—wickedness even to the pitch of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, I have

never in the course of a large experience of impenitence found paral-  
lelled. It almost drives me to the belief that the enemy of souls is  
still occasionally permitted to take up his personal abode in the heart  
of him who wilfully turns aside from revealed truth. I forgive you  
for the ruin you have brought upon our fondest hopes, and the agony  
with which you have torn the hearts of those who more than life  
loved him of whom you falsely called yourself the friend. But I fear  
you have already gone too far ever to feel your need of that forgive-  
ness which alone can avail you. Yet I say—Repent, for the mercy  
of the Lord is infinite. Though my boy is lost to me for ever, I  
should yet rejoice to see the instrument of his ruin plucked as a  
brand from the burning.

“Your obedient well-wisher,

“CHARLES OSBORNE.

“P.S.—I retain your letter for the sake of my less experienced  
brethren, that I may be able to afford an instance of how far the  
unregenerate mind can go in its antagonism to the God of Revelation.”

I breathed a deep breath, and laid the letter down, mainly con-  
cerned as to whether Mary had had the chance of reading mine. I  
could believe any amount of tyranny in her father—even to perusing  
and withholding her letters; but in this I may do him injustice, for  
there is no common ground known to me from which to start in  
speculating upon his probable actions. I wrote in answer something  
nearly as follows :

“SIR,

“That you should do me injustice can by this time be no  
matter of surprise to me. Had I the slightest hope of convincing  
you of the fact, I should strain every mental nerve to that end.  
But no one can labour without hope, and as in respect of *your*  
justice I have none, I will be silent. May the God in whom I trust  
convince you of the cruelty of which you have been guilty; the God  
in whom you profess to believe, must be too like yourself to give any  
ground of such hope from him.

“Your obedient servant,

“WILFRID CUMBERMEDE.”

If Mary had read my letter, I felt assured her reading had been  
very different from her father's. Anyhow she could not judge me as  
he did, for she knew me better. She knew that for Charley's sake I  
had tried the harder to believe myself.

But the reproaches of one who had been so unjust to his own son,  
could not weigh very heavily on me, and I now resumed my work  
with a tolerable degree of calmness. But I wrote badly. I should

have done better to go down to the Moat, and be silent. If my reader has ever seen what I wrote at that time, I should like her to know that I now wish it all unwritten—not for any utterance contained in it, but simply for its general inferiority.

Certainly work is not always required of a man. There is such a thing as a sacred idleness, the cultivation of which is now fearfully neglected. Abraham, seated in his tent door in the heat of the day, would be to the philosophers of the nineteenth century an object for uplifted hands and pointed fingers. They would see in him only the indolent Arab, whom nothing but the foolish fancy that he saw his Maker in the distance, could rouse to run.

It was clearly better to attempt no further communication with Mary at present; and I could think but of one person from whom, without giving pain, I might hope for some information concerning her.

\* \* \* \* \*

Here I had written a detailed account of how I contrived to meet Miss Pease, but it is not of consequence enough to my story to be allowed to remain. Suffice it to mention that one morning at length I caught sight of her in a street in Mayfair, where the family was then staying for the season, and overtaking addressed her.

She started, stared at me for a moment, and held out her hand.

"I didn't know you, Mr. Cumbermede. How much older you look! I beg your pardon. Have you been ill?"

She spoke hurriedly, and kept looking over her shoulder now and then as if afraid of being seen talking to me.

"I have had a good deal to make me older since we met last, Miss Pease," I said. "I have hardly a friend left in the world but you—that is, if you will allow me to call you one."

"Certainly, certainly," she answered, but hurriedly, and with one of those uneasy glances. "Only you must allow, Mr. Cumbermede, that—that—that——"

The poor lady was evidently unprepared to meet me on the old footing, and, at the same time, equally unwilling to hurt my feelings.

"I should be sorry to make you run a risk for my sake," I said. "Please just answer me one question. Do you know what it is to be misunderstood—to be despised without deserving it?"

She smiled sadly, and nodded her head gently two or three times.

"Then have pity on me, and let me have a little talk with you."

Again she glanced apprehensively over her shoulder.

"You are afraid of being seen with me, and I don't wonder," I said.

"Mr. Geoffrey came up with us," she answered. "I left him at breakfast. He will be going across the park to his club directly."

"Then come with me the other way—into Hyde Park," I said.

With evident reluctance, she yielded and accompanied me.

As soon as we got within Stanhope Gate, I spoke.

"A certain sad event, of which you have no doubt heard, Miss

Pease, has shut me out from all communication with the family of my friend Charley Osborne. I am very anxious for some news of his sister. She is all that is left of him to me now. Can you tell me anything about her?"

"She has been very ill," she replied.

"I hope that means that she is better," I said.

"She is better, and, I hear, going on the continent, as soon as the season will permit. But, Mr. Cumbermede, you must be aware that I am under considerable restraint in talking to you. The position I hold in Sir Giles's family, although neither a comfortable nor a dignified one——"

"I understand you perfectly, Miss Pease," I returned, "and fully appreciate the sense of propriety which causes your embarrassment. But the request I am about to make has nothing to do with them or their affairs whatever. I only want your promise to let me know if you hear anything of Miss Osborne."

"I cannot tell—what——"

"What use I may be going to make of the information you give me. In a word, you do not trust me."

"I neither trust nor distrust you, Mr. Cumbermede. But I am afraid of being drawn into a correspondence with you."

"Then I will ask no promise. I will hope in your generosity. Here is my address. I pray you, as you would have helped him who fell among thieves, to let me know anything you hear about Mary Osborne."

She took my card, and turned at once, saying,

"Mind, I make no promise."

"I imagine none," I answered. "I will trust in your kindness." And so we parted.

Unsatisfactory as the interview was, it yet gave me a little hope. I was glad to hear Mary was going abroad, for it must do her good. For me, I would endure and labour and hope. I gave her to God, as Shakspeare says somewhere, and set myself to my work. When her mind was quieter about Charley, somehow or other I might come near her again.—I could not see how.

I took my way across the Green Park.

I do not believe we notice the half of the coincidences that float past us on the stream of events. Things which would fill us with astonishment, and probably with foreboding, look us in the face and pass us by, and we know nothing of them.

As I walked along in the direction of the Mall, I became aware of a tall man coming towards me, stooping as if with age, while the length of his stride indicated a more vigorous period. He passed without lifting his head, but in the partial view of the wan and furrowed countenance I could not fail to recognize Charley's father. Such a worn unhappiness was there depicted, that the indignation



which still lingered in my bosom went out in compassion. If his sufferings might but teach him that to brand the truth of the kingdom with the private mark of opinion, must result in persecution and cruelty! He mounted the slope with strides at once eager and aimless, and I wondered whether any of the sure-coming compunctions had yet begun to overshadow the complacency of his faith; whether he had yet begun to doubt if it pleased the Son of Man that a youth should be driven from the gates of truth, because he failed to recognize her image in the faces of the janitors.

Aimless, also, I turned into the Mall, and again I started at the sight of a known figure. Was it possible?—could it be my Lilith betwixt the shafts of a public cabriolet? Fortunately it was empty. I hailed it, and jumped up, telling the driver to take me to my chambers. My poor Lilith! She was working like one who had never been loved! So far as I knew, she had never been in harness before. She was badly groomed and thin, but much of her old spirit remained. I soon entered into negotiations with the driver, whose property she was, and made her my own once more, with a delight I could ill express in plain prose—for my friends were indeed few. I wish I could draw a picture of the lovely creature, when at length, having concluded my bargain, I approached her, and called her by her name! She turned her head sideways towards me with a low whinny of pleasure, and when I walked a little away, walked wearily after me. I took her myself to livery stables near me, and wrote for Styles. His astonishment when he saw her was amusing.

“Good Lord! Miss Lilith!” was all he could say—for some moments.

In a few days she had begun to look like herself, and I sent her home with Styles. I should hardly like to say how much the recovery of her did to restore my spirits: I could not help regarding it as a good omen.

And now, the first bitterness of my misery having died a natural death, I sought again some of the friends I had made through Charley, and experienced from them great kindness. I began also to go into society a little, for I had found that invention is ever ready to lose the forms of life if it be not kept under the ordinary pressure of its atmosphere. As it is, I doubt much if any of my books are more than partially true to those forms, for I have ever heeded them too little; but I believe I have been true to the heart of man. But that heart I have ever regarded more as the fountain of aspiration than the grave of fruition. The discomfiture of enemies and a happy marriage never seemed to me ends of sufficient value to close a history withal—I mean a fictitious history wherein one may set forth joys and sorrows which in a real history must walk shadowed under the veil of modesty; for the soul still less than the body, will consent to be revealed to all eyes. Hence, although most of my

books have seemed true to some, they have all seemed visionary to most.

A year passed away, during which I never left London. I heard from Miss Pease—that Miss Osborne, although much better, was not going to return until after another winter. I wrote and thanked her, and heard no more. It may seem I accepted such ignorance with strange indifference; but even to the reader for whom alone I am writing, I cannot, as things are, attempt to lay open all my heart. I have not written and cannot write how I thought, projected, brooded, and dreamed—all about *her*; how I hoped when I wrote that she might read; how I questioned what I had written, to find whether it would look to her what I had intended it to appear.

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CHAPTER LVI.

THE LAST VISION.

I HAD engaged to accompany one of Charley's barrister-friends, in whose society I had found considerable satisfaction, to his father's house—to spend the evening with some friends of the family. The gathering was chiefly for talk, and was a kind of thing I disliked, finding its aimlessness and flicker depressing. Indeed, partly from the peculiar circumstances of my childhood, partly from what I had suffered, I always found my spirits highest when alone. Still, the study of humanity apart, I felt that I ought not to shut myself out from my kind but endure some little irksomeness, if only for the sake of keeping alive that surface friendliness which has its value in the nourishment of the deeper affections. On this particular occasion, however, I yielded the more willingly that, in the revival of various memories of Charley, it had occurred to me that I once heard him say that his sister had a regard for one of the ladies of the family.

There were not many people in the drawing-room when we arrived, and my friend's mother alone was there to entertain them. With her I was chatting when one of her daughters entered, accompanied by a lady in mourning. For one moment I felt as if on the borders of insanity. My brain seemed to surge like the waves of a wind-tormented tide, so that I dared not make a single step forward lest my limbs should disobey me. It was indeed Mary Osborne; but oh, how changed! The rather full face had grown delicate and thin, and the fine pure complexion if possible finer and purer, but certainly more ethereal and evanescent. It was as if suffering had removed some substance unapt,\* and rendered her body a better fitting garment for her soul. Her face, which had before required the softening influences of sleep and dreams to give it the plasticity necessary for complete expression, was now full of a repressed expres-

\* Spenser's "Hyane in Honour of Beautie."

sion, if I may be allowed the phrase—a latent something ever on the tremble, ever on the point of breaking forth, It was as if the nerves had grown finer, more tremulous, or, rather, more vibrative. Touched to finer issues they could never have been, but suffering had given them a more responsive thrill. In a word she was the Athanasia of my dream, not the Mary Osborne of the Mold-warp library.

Conquering myself at last, and seeing a favourable opportunity, I approached her. I think the fear lest her father should enter, gave me the final impulse; otherwise I could have been contented to gaze on her for hours in motionless silence.

“May I speak to you, Mary?” I said.

She lifted her eyes and her whole face towards mine, without a smile, without a word. Her features remained perfectly still, but, like the outbreak of a fountain, the tears rushed into her eyes and overflowed in silent weeping. Not a sob, not a convulsive movement accompanied their flow.

“Is your father here?” I asked.

She shook her head.

“I thought you were abroad somewhere—I did not know where.”

Again she shook her head. She dared not speak, knowing that if she made the attempt she must break down.

“I will go away till you can bear the sight of me,” I said.

She half-stretched out a thin white hand, but whether to detain me or bid me farewell I do not know, for it dropped again on her knee.

“I will come to you by and by,” I said, and moved away. .

The rooms rapidly filled, and in a few minutes I could not see the corner where I had left her. I endured everything for a while, and then made my way back to it; but she was gone, and I could find her nowhere. A lady began to sing. When the applause which followed her performance was over, my friend, who happened to be near me, turned abruptly and said,

“Now, Cumbermede, *you* sing.”

The truth was, that since I had loved Mary Osborne, I had attempted to cultivate a certain small gift of song which I thought I possessed. I dared not touch any existent music, for I was certain I should break down; but having a faculty—somewhat thin, I fear—for writing songs, and finding that a shadowy air always accompanied the birth of the words, I had presumed to study music a little, in the hope of becoming able to fix the melody—the twin sister of the song. I had made some progress, and had grown able to write down a simple thought. There was little presumption then, in venturing my voice, limited as was its scope, upon a trifle of my own. Tempted by the opportunity of realizing hopes consciously wild, I obeyed my friend, and, sitting down to the instrument in some trepidation, sang the following verses:—

I dreamed that I woke from a dream,  
And the house was full of light;  
At the window two angel Sorrows  
Held back the curtains of night.

The door was wide, and the house  
Was full of the morning wind;  
At the door two armed warders  
Stood silent, with faces blind.

I ran to the open door,  
For the wind of the world was sweet;  
The warders with crossing weapons  
Turned back my issuing feet.

I ran to the shining windows—  
There the winged Sorrows stood;  
Silent they held the curtains,  
And the light fell through in a flood.

I clomb to the highest window—  
Ah! there, with shadowed brow,  
Stood one lonely radiant Sorrow,  
And that, my love, was thou.

I could not have sung this in public but that no one would suspect it was my own, or was in the least likely to understand a word of it—except her for whose ears and heart it was intended.

As soon as I had finished, I rose and once more went searching for Mary. But as I looked, sadly fearing she was gone, I heard her voice close behind me.

"Are those verses your own, Mr. Cumbermede?" she asked, almost in a whisper.

I turned trembling. Her lovely face was looking up at me.

"Yes," I answered—"as much my own as that I believe they are not to be found anywhere. But they were given to me rather than made by me."

"Would you let me have them? I am not sure that I understand them."

"I am not sure that I understand them myself. They are for the heart rather than the mind. Of course you shall have them. They were written for you. All I have, all I am is yours."

Her face flushed and grew pale again instantly.

"You must not talk so," she said. "Remember."

"I can never forget. I do not know why you say *remember*."

"On second thoughts, I must not have the verses. I beg your pardon."

"Mary, you bewilder me. I have no right to ask you to explain, except that you speak as if I must understand. What have they been telling you about me?"

"Nothing—at least nothing that——"

She paused.

"I try to live innocently, and were it only for your sake, shall never stop searching for the thread of life in its ravelled skein."

"Do not say for *my* sake, Mr. Cumbermede. That means nothing. Say for your own sake if not for God's."

"If *you* are going to turn away from me, I don't mind how soon I follow Charley."

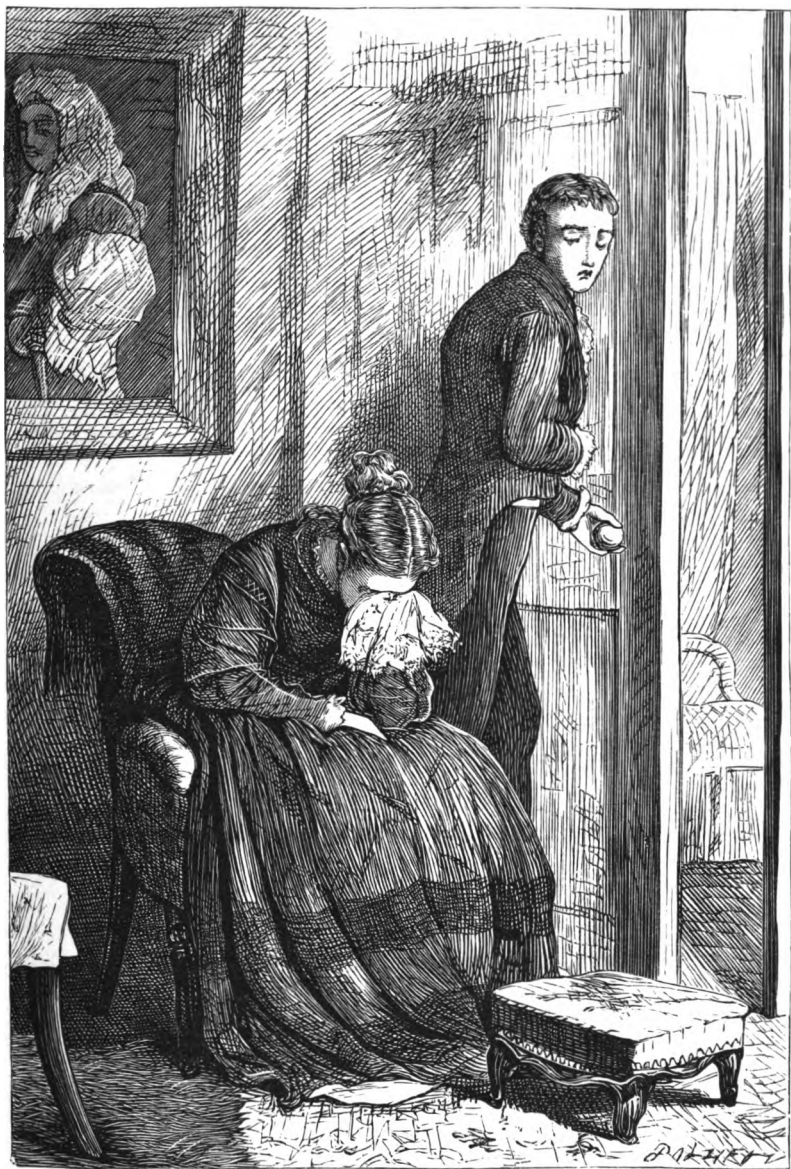
All this was said in a half whisper, I bending towards her where she sat, a little sheltered by one of a pair of folding doors. My heart was like to break—or rather it seemed to have vanished out of me altogether, lost in a gulf of emptiness. Was this all? Was this the end of my dreaming? To be thus pushed aside by the angel of my resurrection?

"Hush! hush!" she said kindly. "You must have many friends. But——"

"But you will be my friend no more? Is that it, Mary? Oh, if you knew all! And you are never never to know it!"

Her still face was once more streaming with tears. I choked mine back, terrified at the thought of being observed; and without even offering my hand, left her and made my way through the crowd to the stair. On the landing I met Geoffrey Brotherton. We stared each other in the face, and passed.

I did not sleep much that night, and when I did sleep, woke from one wretched dream after another, now crying aloud, and now weeping. What could I have done? or rather what could any one have told her I had done to make her behave thus to me? She did not look angry—or even displeased—only sorrowful, very sorrowful; and she seemed to take it for granted I knew what it meant. When at length I finally woke after an hour of less troubled sleep, I found some difficulty in convincing myself that the real occurrences of the night before had not been one of the many troubled dreams that had scared my repose. Even after the dreams had all vanished, and the facts remained, they still appeared more like a dim dream of the dead—the vision of Mary was so wan and hopeless, memory alone looking out from her worn countenance. There had been no warmth in her greeting, no resentment in her aspect; we met as if we had parted but an hour before, only that an open grave was between us, across which we talked in the voices of dreamers. She had sought to raise no barrier between us, just because we *could* not meet, save as one of the dead and one of the living. What could it mean? But with the growing day awoke a little courage. I would at least try to find out what it meant. Surely *all* my dreams were not to vanish like the mist of the morning! To lose my dreams would be far worse than to lose the so-called realities of life. What were these to me? What value lay in such reality? Even God was as yet so dim and far off as to seem rather in the region of dreams—



"WILFRID CUMBERMEDE."



of those true dreams, I hoped, that shadow forth the real—than in the actual visible present. “Still,” I said to myself, “she had not cast me off; she did not refuse to know me; she did ask for my song, and I will send it.”

I wrote it out, adding a stanza to the verses:—

I bowed my head before her,  
And stood trembling in the light;  
She dropped the heavy curtain,  
And the house was full of night.

I then sought my friend's chambers.

“I was not aware you knew the Osbornes,” I said. “I wonder you never told me, seeing Charley and you were such friends.”

“I never saw one of them till last night. My sister and she knew each other some time ago, and have met again of late. What a lovely creature she is! But what became of you last night? You must have left before any one else.”

“I didn't feel well.”

“You don't look the thing.”

“I confess meeting Miss Osborne rather upset me.”

“It had the same effect on her. She was quite ill, my sister said this morning. No wonder! Poor Charley! I always had a painful feeling that he would come to grief somehow.”

“Let's hope he's come to something else by this time, Marston,” I said.

“Amen,” he returned.

“Is her father or mother with her?”

“No. They are to fetch her away—next week, I think it is.”

I had now no fear of my communication falling into other hands, and therefore sent the song by post, with a note, in which I begged her to let me know if I had done anything to offend her. Next morning I received the following reply.

“No, Wilfrid—for Charley's sake, I must call you by your name—you have done nothing to offend me. Thank you for the song. I did not want you to send it, but I will keep it. You must not write to me again. Do not forget what we used to write about. God's ways are not ours. Your friend, Mary Osborne.”

I rose and went out, not knowing whither. Half-stunned, I roamed the streets. I ate nothing that day, and when towards night I found myself near my chambers, I walked in as I had come out, having no intent, no future. I felt very sick, and threw myself on my bed. There I passed the night, half in sleep, half in a helpless prostration. When I look back, it seems as if some spiritual narcotic must have been given me, else how should the terrible time have passed and left me alive? When I came to myself, I found I was ill, and I longed to hide my head in the nest of my childhood. I had always



looked on the Moat as my refuge at the last ; now it seemed the only desirable thing—a lonely nook, in which to lie down and end the dream there begun—either, as it now seemed, in an eternal sleep, or the inburst of a dreary light. After the last refuge it could afford me it must pass from my hold ; but I was yet able to determine whither. I rose and went to Marston.

“Marston,” I said, “I want to make my will.”

“All right !” he returned ; “but you look as if you meant to register it as well. You’ve got a feverish cold : I see it in your eyes. Come along. I’ll go home with you, and fetch a friend of mine who will give you something to do you good.”

“I can’t rest till I have made my will,” I persisted.

“Well, there’s no harm in that,” he rejoined. “It won’t take long, I dare say.”

“It needn’t anyhow. I only want to leave the small real property I have to Miss Osborne, and the still smaller personal property to yourself.”

He laughed.

“All right, old boy ! I haven’t the slightest objection to your willing your traps to me, but every objection in the world to your *leaving* them. To be sure, every man, with anything to leave, ought to make his will betimes ;—so fire away.”

In a little while the draught was finished.

“I shall have it ready for your signature by to-morrow,” he said.

I insisted it should be done at once. I was going home, I said. He yielded. The will was engrossed, signed, and witnessed, that same morning ; and in the afternoon I set out, the first part of the journey by rail, for the Moat.

## CHAPTER LVII.

### ANOTHER DREAM.

THE excitement of having something to do, had helped me over the morning, and the pleasure of thinking of what I had done, helped me through half the journey ; but before I reached home, I was utterly exhausted. Then I had to drive round by the farm, and knock up Mrs. Herbert and Styles.

I could not bear the thought of my own room, and ordered a fire in my grandmother’s, where they soon got me into bed. All I remember of that night is the following dream.

I found myself at the entrance of the ice-cave. A burning sun beat on my head, and at my feet flowed the brook which gathered its life from the decay of the ice. I stooped to drink ; but, cool to the eye and hand and lips, it yet burned me within like fire. I would seek shelter from the sun inside the cave. I entered, and knew that the cold was all around me ; I even felt it ; but somehow it did not

enter into me. My brain, my very bones burned with fire. I went in and in. The blue atmosphere closed around me, and the colour entered into my soul till it seemed dyed with the potent blue. My very being swam and floated in a blue atmosphere of its own. My intention—I can recall it perfectly—was but to walk to the end, a few yards, then turn and again brave the sun ; for I had a dim feeling of forsaking my work, of playing truant, or of being cowardly in thus avoiding the heat. Something else too was wrong, but I could not clearly tell what. As I went on, I began to wonder that I had not come to the end. The gray walls yet rose about me, and ever the film of dissolution flowed along their glassy faces to the runnel below ; still before me opened the depth of blue atmosphere, deepening as I went. After many windings the path began to branch, and soon I was lost in a labyrinth of passages, of which I knew not why I should choose one rather than another. It was useless now to think of returning. Arbitrarily I chose the narrowest way, and still went on.

A discoloration of the ice attracted my attention, and as I looked it seemed to retreat into the solid mass. There was something not ice within it which grew more and more distinct as I gazed, until at last I plainly distinguished the form of my grandmother, lying as then when my aunt made me touch her face. A few yards further on, lay the body of my uncle, as I saw him in his coffin. His face was dead white in the midst of the cold clear ice, his eyes closed, and his arms straight by his side. He lay like an alabaster king upon his tomb. It *was* he, I thought, but he would never speak to me more—never look at me—never more awake. There lay all that was left of him—the cold frozen memory of what he had been and would never be again. I did not weep. I only knew somehow in my dream that life was all a wandering in a frozen cave, where the faces of the living were dark with the coming corruption, and the memories of the dead, cold and clear and hopeless evermore, alone were lovely.

I walked further ; for the ice might possess yet more of the past—all that was left me of life. And again I stood and gazed, for, deep within, I saw the form of Charley—at rest now, his face bloodless, but not so death-like as my uncle's. His hands were laid palm to palm over his bosom, and pointed upwards as if praying for comfort where comfort was none : here at least were no flickerings of the rainbow fancies of faith and hope and charity ! I gazed in comfortless content for a time on the repose of my weary friend, and then went on, only moved to see what further the ice of the godless region might hold. Nor had I wandered far when I saw the form of Mary, lying like the rest, only that her hands were crossed on her bosom. I stood, wondering to find myself so little moved. But when the ice drew nigh me, and would have closed around me, my heart leaped for joy ; and when the heat of my lingering life repelled it, my heart sunk within me, and I said to myself : "Death will not have me. I

may not join her even in the land of cold forgetfulness: I may not even be nothing *with* her." The tears began to flow down my face, like the thin veil of water that kept ever flowing down the face of the ice; and as I wept, the water before me flowed faster and faster, till it rippled in a sheet down the icy wall. Faster and yet faster it flowed, falling, with the sound as of many showers, into the runnel below, which rushed splashing and gurgling away from the foot of the vanishing wall. Faster and faster it flowed, until the solid mass fell in a foaming cataract, and swept in a torrent across the cave. I followed the retreating wall, through the seething water at its foot. Thinner and thinner grew the dividing mass; nearer and nearer came the form of my Mary. "I shall yet clasp her," I cried; "her dead form will kill me, and I too shall be inclosed in the friendly ice. I shall not be with her, alas; but neither shall I be without her, for I shall depart into the lovely nothingness." Thinner and thinner grew the dividing wall. The skirt of her shroud hung like a wet weed in the falling torrent. I kneeled in the river, and crept nearer, with outstretched arms: when the vanishing ice set the dead form free, it should rest in those arms—the last gift of the life-dream—for then, surely, I *must* die. "Let me pass in the agony of a lonely embrace!" I cried. As I spoke she moved. I started to my feet, stung into life by the agony of a new hope. Slowly the ice released her, and gently she rose to her feet. The torrents of water ceased—they had flowed but to set her free. Her eyes were still closed, but she made one blind step towards me, and laid her left hand on my head, her right hand on my heart. Instantly, body and soul, I was cool as a summer eve after a thunder-shower. For a moment, precious as an æon, she held her hands upon me—then slowly opened her eyes. Out of them flashed the living soul of my Athanasia. She closed the lids again slowly over the lovely splendour; the water in which we stood rose around us; and on its last billow she floated away through the winding passage of the cave. I sought to follow her, but could not. I cried aloud and awoke.

But the burning heat had left me; I felt that I had passed a crisis, and had begun to recover—a conviction which would have been altogether unwelcome, but for the poor shadow of a reviving hope which accompanied it. Such a dream, come whence it might, could not but bring comfort with it. The hope grew, and was my sole medicine.

Before the evening I felt better, and, though still very feeble, managed to write to Marston, letting him know I was safe, and requesting him to forward any letters that might arrive.

The next day, I rose, but was unable to work. The very thought of writing sickened me. Neither could I bear the thought of returning to London. I tried to read, but threw aside book after book, without being able to tell what one of them was about. If for

a moment I seemed to enter into the subject, before I reached the bottom of the page, I found I had not an idea as to what the words meant or whither they tended. After many failures, unwilling to give myself up to idle brooding, I fortunately tried some of the mystical poetry of the seventeenth century: the difficulties of that I found rather stimulate than repel me; while, much as there was in the form to displease the taste, there was more in the matter to rouse the intellect. I found also some relief in resuming my mathematical studies: the abstraction of them acted as an anodyne. But the days dragged wearily.

As soon as I was able to get on horseback, the tone of mind and body began to return. I felt as if into me some sort of animal healing passed from Lilith; and who can tell in how many ways the lower animals may not minister to the higher?

One night I had a strange experience. I give it without argument, perfectly aware that the fact may be set down to the disordered state of my physical nature, and that without injustice.

I had not for a long time thought about one of the questions which had so much occupied Charley and myself—that of immortality. As to any communication between the parted, I had never, during his life, pondered the possibility of it, although I had always had an inclination to believe that such intercourse had in rare instances taken place: former periods of the world's history, when that blinding self-consciousness which is the bane of ours was yet undeveloped, must, I thought, have been far more favourable to its occurrence. Anyhow I was convinced that it was not to be gained by effort. I confess that, in the unthinking agony of grief after Charley's death, many a time when I woke in the middle of the night and could sleep no more, I sat up in bed and prayed him, if he heard me, to come to me, and let me tell him the truth—for my sake to let me know at least that he lived, for then I should be sure that one day all would be well. But if there was any hearing, there was no answer. Charley did not come; the prayer seemed to vanish in the darkness; and my more self-possessed meditations never justified the hope of any such being heard.

One night I was sitting in my grannie's room, which, except my uncle's, was now the only one I could bear to enter. I had been reading for some time very quietly, but had leaned back in my chair, and let my thoughts go wandering whither they would, when all at once I was possessed by the conviction that Charley was near me. I saw nothing, heard nothing; of the recognized senses of humanity not one gave me a hint of a presence; and yet my whole body was aware—so at least it seemed—of the proximity of another I. It was as if some nervous region commensurate with my frame, were now for the first time revealed by contact with an object suitable for its apprehension. Like Eliphaz, I felt the hair of my head

stand up—not from terror, but simply, as it seemed, from the presence and its strangeness. Like others also of whom I have read, who believed themselves in the presence of the disembodied, I could not speak. I tried, but as if the medium for sound had been withdrawn, and an empty gulf lay around me, no word followed, although my very soul was full of the cry—*Charley! Charley!* And alas! in a few moments, like the faint vanishing of an unrealized thought, leaving only the assurance that something half-born from out the unknown had been there, the influence faded and died. It passed from me like the shadow of a cloud, and once more I knew but my poor lonely self, returning to its candles, its open book, its burning fire.

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## CHAPTER LVIII.

### THE DARKEST HOUR.

SUFFERING is perhaps the only preparation for suffering: still I was but poorly prepared for what followed.

Having gathered strength, and a certain quietness which I could not mistake for peace, I returned to London towards the close of the spring. I had in the interval heard nothing of Mary. The few letters Marston had sent on had been almost exclusively from my publishers. But the very hour I reached my lodging, came a note, which I opened trembling, for it was in the handwriting of Miss Pease.

“Dear sir, I cannot, I think, be wrong in giving you a piece of information which will be in the newspapers to-morrow morning. Your old acquaintance, and my young relative, Mr. Brotherton, was married this morning, at St. George’s, Hanover Square, to your late friend’s sister, Miss Mary Osborne. They have just left for Dover on their way to Switzerland.—Your sincere well-wisher, JANE PEASE.”

Even at this distance of time, I should have to exhort myself to write with calmness, were it not that the utter despair of conveying my feelings, if indeed my soul had not for the time passed beyond feeling into some abyss unknown to human consciousness, renders it unnecessary. This despair of communication has two sources—the one simply the conviction of the impossibility of expressing *any* feeling, much more such feeling as mine then was—and is; the other the conviction that only to the heart of love can the sufferings of love speak. The attempt of a lover to move, by the presentation of his own suffering, the heart of her who loves him not, is as unavailing as it is unmanly. The poet who sings most wailfully of the torments of the lover’s hell, is but a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal in the ears of her who has at best only a general com-

passion to meet the song withal—possibly only an individual vanity which crowns her with his woes as with the trophies of a conquest. True, he is understood and worshipped by all the other wailful souls in the first infernal circle, as one of the great men of their order—able to put into words full of sweet torment the dire hopelessness of their misery ; but for such the singer, singing only for ears eternally deaf to his song, cares nothing ; or if for a moment he receive consolation from their sympathy, it is but a passing weakness which the breath of an indignant self-condemnation—even contempt, the next moment sweeps away. In God alone there must be sympathy and cure ; but I had not then—have I indeed yet found what that cure is ? I am at all events now able to write with calmness. If suffering destroyed itself, as some say, mine ought to have disappeared long ago ; but to that I can neither pretend nor confess.

For the first time, after all I had encountered, I knew what suffering could be. It is still at moments an agony as of hell to recall this and the other thought that then stung me like a white-hot arrow : the shafts have long been drawn out, but the barbed heads are still there. I neither stormed nor maddened. I only felt a freezing hand lay hold of my heart, and gripe it closer and closer till I should have sickened, but that the pain ever stung me into fresh life ; and ever since I have gone about the world with that hard lump somewhere in my bosom into which the griping hand and the griped heart have grown and stiffened.

I fled at once back to my solitary house, looking for no relief in its solitude, only the negative comfort of escaping the eyes of men. I could not bear the sight of my fellow-creatures. To say that the world had grown black to me, is as nothing : I ceased—I will not say *to believe* in God, for I never dared say that mighty thing—but I ceased to hope in God. The universe had grown a negation which yet forced its presence upon me—a death that bred worms. If there were a God anywhere, this universe could be nothing more than his forsaken moth-eaten garment. He was a God who did not care. Order was all an invention of phosphorescent human brains ; light itself the mocking smile of a Jupiter over his writhing sacrifices. At times I laughed at the tortures of my own heart, saying to it, “ Writhe on, worm ; thou deservest thy writhing in that thou writhest. Godless creature, why dost thou not laugh with me ? Am I not merry over thee and the world—in that ye are both rottenness to the core ? ” The next moment my heart and I would come together with a shock, and I knew it was myself that scorned myself.

Such being my mood, it will cause no surprise if I say that I too was tempted to suicide ; the wonder would have been if it had been otherwise. The soft keen curves of that fatal dagger, which had not only slain Charley but all my hopes—for had he lived this horror

could not have been—grew almost lovely in my eyes. Until now it had looked cruel, fiendish, hateful; but now I would lay it before me and contemplate it. In some griefs there is a wonderful power of self-contemplation, which indeed forms their only solace; the moment it can set the sorrow away from itself sufficiently to regard it, the tortured heart begins to repose; but suddenly, like a waking tiger, the sorrow leaps again into its lair, and the agony commences anew. The dagger was the type of my grief and its torture: might it not, like the brazen serpent, be the cure for the sting of its living counterpart? But alas! where was the certainty? Could I slay *myself*? This outer breathing form I could dismiss—but the pain was not *there*. I was not mad, and I knew that a deeper death than that could give, at least than I had any assurance that could give, alone could bring repose. For, impossible as I had always found it actually to believe in immortality, I now found it equally impossible to believe in annihilation. And even if annihilation should be the final result, who could tell but it might require ages of a horrible slow-decaying dream-consciousness, to kill the living thing which felt itself other than its body?

Until now, I had always accepted what seemed the natural and universal repugnance to absolute dissolution, as the strongest argument on the side of immortality;—for why should a man shrink from that which belonged to his nature? But now annihilation seemed the one lovely thing, the one sole only lonely thought in which lay no blackness of burning darkness. Oh for one eternal unconscious sleep!—the nearest likeness we can cherish of that inconceivable nothingness—ever denied by the very thinking of it—by the vain attempt to realize that whose very existence is the knowing nothing of itself! Could that dagger have insured me such repose, or had there been any draught of Lethe, utter Lethe, whose blessed poison would have assuredly dissipated like a fume this conscious, self-tormenting *me*, I should not now be writhing anew, as in the clutches of an old grief, clasping me like a corpse, stung to simulated life by the galvanic battery of recollection. Vivid as it seems—all I suffer as I write is but a faint phantasm of what I then endured.

I learned therefore that to some minds the argument for immortality drawn from the apparently universal shrinking from annihilation must be ineffectual, seeing they themselves do not shrink from it. Convince a man that there is no God—or, for I doubt if that be altogether possible—make it, I will say, impossible for him to hope in God—and it cannot be that annihilation should seem an evil. If there is no God, annihilation is the one thing to be longed for with all that might of longing which is the mainspring of human action. In a word, it is not immortality the human heart cries out after, but that immortal eternal thought whose life is its life, whose

wisdom is its wisdom, whose ways and whose thoughts shall—must one day—become its ways and its thoughts. Dissociate immortality from the living Immortality and it is not a thing to be desired—not a thing that can on those terms, or even on the fancy of those terms, be desired.

But such thoughts as these were far enough from me then. I lived because I despaired of death. I ate by a sort of blind animal instinct, and so lived. The time had been when I would despise myself for being able to eat in the midst of emotion; but now I cared so little for the emotion even, that eating or not eating had nothing to do with the matter. I ate because meat was set before me; I slept because sleep came upon me. It was a horrible time. My life seemed only a vermiculate one, a crawling about of half-thoughts-half-feelings through the corpse of a decaying existence. The heart of being was withdrawn from me, and my life was but the vacant pericardium in which it had once throbbed out and sucked in the red fountains of life and gladness.

I would not be thought to have fallen to this all but bottomless depth only because I had lost Mary. Still less was it because of the fact that in her, around whom had gathered all the devotion with which the man in me could regard woman, I had lost all woman-kind. It was *the loss* of Mary, as I then judged it, not, I repeat, the fact that *I* had lost her. It was that she had lost herself. Thence it was, I say, that I lost my hope in God. For, if there were a God, how could he let purity be clasped in the arms of defilement? how could he marry my Athanasia—not to a corpse, but to a Plague? Here was the man who had done more to ruin her brother than any but her father, and God had given her to *him*! I had had—with the commonest of men—some notion of womanly purity—how was it that hers had not instinctively shuddered and shrunk? how was it that the life of it had not taken refuge with death to shun bare contact with the coarse impurity of such a nature as that of Geoffrey Brotherton? My dreams had been dreams indeed! Was my Athanasia dead, or had she never been? In my thought, she had “said to Corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister.” Who should henceforth say of any woman that she was impure? She *might* love him—true; but what was she then who was able to love such a man? It was this that stormed the citadel of my hope, and drove me from even thinking of a God.

Gladly would I now have welcomed any bodily suffering that could hide me from myself; but no illness came. I was a living pain, a conscious ill-being. In a thousand forms those questions would ever recur, but without hope of answer. When I fell asleep from exhaustion, hideous visions of her with Geoffrey would start me up with a great cry, sometimes with a curse on my lips. Nor were they



the most horrible of those dreams in which she would help him to mock me. Once, and only once, I found myself dreaming the dream of *that* night, and I knew that I had dreamed it before. Through palace and chapel and charnel-house, I followed her, ever with a dim sense of awful result; and when at the last she lifted the shining veil, instead of the face of Athanasia, the bare teeth of a skull grinned at me from under a spotted shroud, through which the sunlight shone from behind, revealing all its horrors. I was not mad—my reason had not given way: *how* remains a marvel.

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## CHAPTER LIX.

### THE DAWN.

ALL places were alike to me now—for the universe was but one dreary chasm whence I could not escape. One evening I sat by the open window of my chamber, which looked towards those trees and that fatal Moldwarp Hall. My suffering had now grown dull by its own excess, and I had moments of listless vacuity, the nearest approach to peace I had yet experienced. It was a fair evening of early summer—but I was utterly careless of nature as of all beyond it. The sky was nothing to me—and the earth was all unlovely. There I sat, heavy, but free from torture; a kind of quiet had stolen over me. I was roused by the tiniest breath of wind on my cheek, as if the passing wing of some butterfly had fanned me; and on that faintest motion came a scent as from long-forgotten fields, a scent like as of sweet-peas or wild roses, but of neither: flowers were none nearer me than the gardens of the Hall. I started with a cry. It was the scent of the garments of my Athanasia, as I had dreamed it in my dream! Whence that wind had borne it, who could tell? but in the husk that had overgrown my being it had found a cranny, and through that cranny, with the scent, Nature entered. I looked up to the blue sky, wept, and for the first time fell on my knees. "O God!" I cried, and that was all. But what are the prayers of the whole universe more than expansions of that one cry? It is not what God can give us but God that we want. Call the whole thing fancy if you will; it was at least no fancy that the next feeling of which I was conscious was compassion: from that moment I began to search heaven and earth and the soul of man and woman for excuses wherewith to clothe the idea of Mary Osborne. For weeks and weeks I pondered, and by degrees the following conclusions wrought themselves out in my brain:—

That she had never seen life as a whole; that her religious theories had ever been eating away and absorbing her life, so preventing her religion from interpenetrating and glorifying it; that in regard to certain facts and consequences she had been left to an ignorance

which her innocence rendered profound; that, attracted by the worldly splendour of the offer, her father and mother had urged her compliance, and, broken in spirit by the fate of Charley, and having always been taught that self-denial was in itself a virtue, she had taken the worldly desires of her parents for the will of God, and blindly yielded; that Brotherton was capable, for his ends, of representing himself as possessed of religion enough to satisfy the scruples of her parents, and, such being satisfied, she had resisted her own as evil things.

Whether his hatred of me had had any share in his desire to possess her, I hardly thought of inquiring.

Of course I did not for a single moment believe that Mary had had the slightest notion of the bitterness, the torture, the temptation of Satan it would be to me. Doubtless the feeling of her father concerning the death of Charley had seemed to hollow an impassable gulf between us. Worn and weak, and not knowing what she did, my dearest friend had yielded herself to the embrace of my deadliest foe. If he was such as I had too good reason for believing him, she was far more to be pitied than I. Lonely she must be—lonely as I—for who was there to understand and love her? Bitterly too by this time she must have suffered, for the dove can never be at peace in the bosom of the vulture, or cease to hate the carrion of which he must ever carry about with him at least the disgusting memorials. Alas! I too had been her enemy, and had cried out against her; but now I would love her more and better than ever! Oh! if I knew but something I could do for her, some service which on the bended knees of my spirit I might offer her! I clomb the heights of my grief, and looked abroad, but alas! I was such a poor creature! A dabbler in the ways of the world, a writer of tales which even those who cared to read them counted fantastic and Utopian, who was I to weave a single silken thread into the web of her life? How could I bear her one poorest service? Never in this world could I approach her near enough to touch yet once again the hem of her garment. All I could do was to love her. No—I could and did suffer for her. Alas! that suffering was only for myself, and could do nothing for her! It was indeed some consolation to me that my misery came from her hand; but if she knew it, it would but add to her pain. In my heart I could only pray her pardon for my wicked and selfish thoughts concerning her, and vow again and ever to regard her as my Athanasia.—But yes! there was one thing I *could* do for her: I would be a true man for her sake; she should have some satisfaction in me; I would once more arise and go to my Father.

The instant the thought arose in my mind, I fell down before the possible God in an agony of weeping. All complaint of my own doom had vanished, now that I began to do her the justice of love. Why should I be blessed—here and now at least—according to my

notions of blessedness? Let the great heart of the universe do with me as it pleased! Let the Supreme take his own time to justify himself to the heart that sought to love him! I gave up myself, was willing to suffer, to be a living pain, so long as he pleased; and the moment I yielded, half the pain was gone; I gave my Athanasia yet again to God, and all *might* yet, in some high, far-off, better-world-way, be well. I could wait and endure. If only God was, and was God, then it was, or would be, well with Mary—well with me!

But, as I still sat, a flow of sweet sad repentant thought passing gently through my bosom, all at once the self to which, unable to confide it to the care of its own very life, the God conscious of himself and in himself conscious of it, I had been for months offering the sacrifices of despair and indignation, arose in spectral hideousness before me. I saw that I, a child of the infinite, had been worshipping the finite—and therein dragging down the infinite towards the fate of the finite. I do not mean that in Mary Osborne I had been worshipping the finite. It was the eternal, the lovely, the true that in her I had been worshipping: in myself I had been worshipping the mean, the selfish, the finite, the god of spiritual greed. Only in himself *can* a man find the finite to worship; only in turning back upon himself does he create the finite for and by his worship. All the works of God are everlasting; the only perishable are some of the works of man. All love is a worship of the infinite: what is called a man's love for himself, is not love; it is but a phantastic resemblance of love; it is a creating of the finite, a creation of death. A man *cannot* love himself. If all love be not creation—as I think it is—it is at least the only thing in harmony with creation and the love of oneself is its absolute opposite. I sickened at the sight of myself: how should I ever get rid of the demon? The same instant I saw the one escape: I must offer it back to its source—commit it to him who had made it. I must live no more from it, but from the source of it; seek to know nothing more of it than he gave me to know by his presence therein. Thus might I become one with the Eternal in such an absorption as Buddha had never dreamed; thus might I draw life ever fresh from its fountain. And in that fountain alone would I contemplate its reflex. What flashes of self-consciousness might cross me, should be God's gift, not of my seeking, and offered again to him in ever new self-sacrifice. Alas! alas! this I saw then, and this I yet see; but oh, how far am I still from that divine annihilation! The only comfort is, God is, and I am his, else I should not be at all.

I saw too that thus God also lives—in his higher way. I saw, shadowed out in the absolute devotion of Jesus to men, that the very life of God by which we live is an everlasting eternal giving of himself away. He asserts himself, only, solely, altogether, in an infinite sacrifice of devotion. So must we live; the child must be as

the father ; live he cannot on any other plan, struggle as he may. The father requires of him nothing that he is not or does not himself, who is the one prime unconditioned sacrificer and sacrifice. I threw myself on the ground, and offered back my poor wretched self to its owner, to be taken and kept, purified and made divine.

The same moment a sense of reviving health began to possess me. With many fluctuations, it has possessed me, has grown, and is now, if not a persistent cheerfulness, yet an unyielding hope. The world bloomed again around me. The sunrise again grew gloriously dear ; and the sadness of the moon was lighted from a higher sun than that which returns with the morning.

My relation to Mary resolved and re-formed itself in my mind into something I can explain only by the following—call it dream : it was not a dream ; call it vision : it was not a vision ; and yet I will tell it as if it were either, being far truer than either.

I lay like a child on one of God's arms. I could not see his face, and the arm that held me was a great cloudy arm. I knew that on his other arm lay Mary. But between us were forests and plains, mountains and great seas ; and, unspeakably worse than all, a gulf with which words had nothing to do, a gulf of pure separation, of impassable nothingness, across which no device, I say not of human skill, but of human imagination, could cast a single connecting cord. There lay Mary, and here lay I—both in God's arms—utterly parted. As in a swoon I lay, through which suddenly came the words : "What God hath joined, man cannot sunder." I lay thinking what they could mean. All at once I thought I knew. Straightway I rose on the cloudy arm, looked down on a measureless darkness beneath me, and up on a great, dreary, world-filled eternity above me, and crept along the arm towards the bosom of God.

In telling my—neither vision nor dream nor ecstasy, I cannot help it that the forms grow so much plainer and more definite in the words than they were in the revelation. Words always give either too much or too little shape : when you want to be definite, you find your words clumsy and blunt ; when you want them for a vague shadowy image, you straightway find them give a sharp and impertinent outline, refusing to lend themselves to your undefined though vivid thought. Forms themselves are hard enough to manage, but words are unmanageable. I must therefore trust to the heart of my reader.

I crept into the bosom of God, and along a great cloudy peace, which I could not understand, for it did not yet enter into me. At length I came to the heart of God, and through that my journey lay. The moment I entered it, the great peace appeared to enter mine, and I began to understand it. Something melted in my heart, and for a moment I thought I was dying, but I found I was being born again. My heart was empty of its old selfishness, and I loved Mary

tenfold—nor longer in the least for my own sake, but all for her loveliness. The same moment I knew that the heart of God was a bridge, along which I was crossing the unspeakable eternal gulf that divided Mary and me. At length, somehow, I know not how, somewhere, I know not where, I was where she was. She knew nothing of my presence, turned neither face nor eye to meet me, stretched out no hand to give me the welcome of even a friend, and yet I not only knew, but felt that she was mine. I wanted nothing from her; desired the presence of her loveliness only that I might know it; hung about her life as a butterfly over the flower he loves; was satisfied that she should *be*. I had left my self behind in the heart of God, and now I was a pure essence, fit to rejoice in the essential. But alas! my whole being was not yet subject to its best. I began to long to be able to do something for her besides—I foolishly said *beyond* loving her. Back rushed my old self in the selfish thought: Some day—will she not know—and at least——? That moment the vision vanished. I was tossed—ah! let me hope, only to the other arm of God—but I lay in torture yet again. For a man may see visions manifold, and believe them all; and yet his faith shall not save him; something more is needed—he must have that presence of God in his soul, of which the Son of Man spoke, saying: “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” God in him, he will be able to love for very love’s sake; God not in him, his best love will die into selfishness.

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## CHAPTER LX.

### MY GREAT-GRANDMOTHER.

THE morning then which had thus dawned upon me, was often overclouded heavily. Yet it was the morning and not the night; and one of the strongest proofs that it was the morning, lay in this, that again I could think in verse.

One day, after an hour or two of bitterness, I wrote the following. A man’s trouble must have receded from him a little for the moment, if he describes any shape in it, so as to be able to give it form in words. I set it down with no hope of better than the vaguest sympathy. There came no music with this one.

If it be that a man and a woman  
Are made for no mutual grief;  
That each gives the pain to some other,  
And neither can give the relief;

If thus the chain of the world  
Is tied round the holy feet,

I scorn to shrink from facing  
What my brothers and sisters meet.

But I cry when the wolf is tearing  
At the core of my heart as now :  
When I was the man to be tortured,  
Why should the woman be *thou* ?

I am not so ready to sink from the lofty into the abject now. If at times I yet feel that the whole creation is groaning and travailing, I know what it is for—its redemption from the dominion of its own death into that sole liberty which comes only of being filled and eternally possessed by God himself, its source and its life.

And now I found also that my heart began to be moved with a compassion towards my fellows such as I had never before experienced. I shall best convey what I mean by transcribing another little poem I wrote about the same time.

Once I sat on a crimson throne, |  
And I held the world in fee ;  
Below me I heard my brothers moan,  
And I bent me down to see ;—

Lovingly bent and looked on them,  
But I had no inward pain ;  
I sat in the heart of my ruby gem,  
Like a rainbow without the rain.

My throne is vanished ; helpless I lie  
At the foot of its broken stair ;  
And the sorrows of all humanity  
Through my heart make a thoroughfare.

Let such things rest for a while : I have now to relate another incident—strange enough, but by no means solitary in the records of human experience. My reader will probably think that of dreams and visions there has already been more than enough ; but perhaps she will kindly remember that at this time I had no outer life at all. Whatever bore to me the look of existence was within me. All my days the tendency had been to an undue predominance of thought over action, and now that the springs of action were for a time dried up, what wonder was it if thought, lording it alone, should assume a reality beyond its right ? Hence the life of the day was prolonged into the night ; nor was there other than a small difference in their conditions, beyond the fact that the contrast of outer things was removed in sleep ; whence the shapes which the waking thought had assumed, had space and opportunity, as it were, to thicken before the mental eye until they became dreams and visions.

But concerning what I am about to relate I shall offer no theory. Such mere operation of my own thoughts may be sufficient to account for it : I would only ask—does any one know what the *mere* opera-

tion of his own thoughts signifies? I cannot isolate myself, especially in those moments when the individual will is less awake, from the ocean of life and thought which not only surrounds me, but on which I am in a sense one of the floating bubbles.

I was asleep, but I thought I lay awake in bed—in the room where I still slept—that which had been my grannie's.—It was dark midnight, and the wind was howling about the gable and in the chimneys. The door opened, and some one entered. By the lamp she carried I knew my great-grandmother—just as she looked in life, only that now she walked upright and with ease. That I was dreaming is plain from the fact that I felt no surprise at seeing her.

"Wilfrid, come with me," she said, approaching the bedside. "Rise."

I obeyed like a child.

"Put your cloak on," she continued. "It is a stormy midnight, but we have not so far to go as you may think."

"I think nothing, grannie," I said. "I do not know where you want to take me."

"Come and see then, my son. You must at last learn what has been kept from you far too long."

As she spoke, she led the way down the stair, through the kitchen, and out into the dark night. I remember the wind blowing my cloak about, but I remember nothing more until I found myself in the winding hazel-walled lane, leading to Umberden Church. My grannie was leading me by one withered hand; in the other she held the lamp, over the flame of which the wind had no power. She led me into the churchyard, took the key from under the tombstone, unlocked the door of the church, put the lamp into my hand, pushed me gently in, and shut the door behind me. I walked to the vestry, and set the lamp on the desk, with a vague feeling that I had been there before, and that I had now to do something at this desk. Above it I caught sight of the row of vellum-bound books, and remembered that one of them contained something of importance to me. I took it down. The moment I opened it, I remembered with distinctness the fatal discrepancy in the entry of my grannie's marriage. I found the place: to my astonishment the date of the year was now the same as that on the preceding page—1747. That instant I awoke in the first gush of the sunrise.

I could not help feeling even a little excited by my dream, and the impression of it grew upon me: I wanted to see the book again. I could not rest. Something seemed constantly urging me to go and look at it. Half to get the thing out of my head, I sent Styles to fetch Lillith, and for the first time since the final assurance of my loss, mounted her. I rode for Umberden Church.

It was long after noon before I had made up my mind, and when, having tied Lillith to the gate, I entered the church, one red ray from

the setting sun was nestling in the very roof. Knowing what I should find, yet wishing to see it again, I walked across to the vestry, feeling rather uncomfortable at the thought of prying thus alone into the parish register.

I could almost have persuaded myself that was I dreaming still ; and in looking back, I can hardly in my mind separate the dreaming from the waking visit.

Of course I found just what I had expected—1748, not 1747—at the top of the page, and was about to replace the register, when the thought occurred to me, that, if the dream had been potent enough to bring me hither, it might yet mean something. I lifted the cover again. There the entry stood undeniably plain. This time, however, I noted two other little facts concerning it.

I will just remind my reader that the entry was crushed in between the date of the year and the next entry—plainly enough to the eye ; and that there was no attestation to the entries of 1747. The first additional fact—and clearly an important one—was, that in the summing up of 1748, before the signature, which stood near the bottom of the cover, a figure had been altered. Originally it stood : “ In all six couple,” but the six had been altered to a seven—corresponding with the actual number. This appeared proof positive that the first entry on the cover was a forged insertion. And how clumsily it had been managed !

“ What could my grannie be about ? ” I said to myself.

It never occurred to me then that it might have been intended to look like a forgery.

Still I kept staring at it, as if by very force of staring I could find out something. There was not the slightest sign of erasure or alteration beyond the instance I have mentioned. Yet—and here was my second note—when I compared the whole of the writing on the cover with the writing on the preceding page, though it seemed the same hand, it seemed to have got stiffer and shakier, as if the writer had grown old between. Finding nothing very suggestive in this, however, I fell into a dreamy mood, watching the red light, as it faded, up in the old, dark, distorted roof of the desolate church—with my hand lying on the book.

I have always had a bad habit of pulling and scratching at any knot or roughness in the paper of the book I happen to be reading ; and now, almost unconsciously, with my forefinger I was pulling at an edge of parchment which projected from the joint of the cover. When I came to myself and proceeded to close the book, I found it would not shut properly because of a piece which I had curled up. Seeking to restore it to its former position, I fancied I saw a line or edge running all down the joint, and looking closer saw that these last entries in place of being upon a leaf of the book pasted to the cover in order to strengthen the binding, as I had supposed,



were indeed upon a leaf which was pasted to the cover, but one not otherwise connected with the volume.

I now began to feel a more lively interest in the behaviour of my dream-grannie. Here might lie something to explain the hitherto inexplicable. I proceeded to pull the leaf gently away. It was of parchment, much thinner than the others, which were of vellum. I had withdrawn only a small portion when I saw there was writing under it. My heart began to beat faster. But I would not be rash. My old experience with parchment in the mending of my uncle's books came to my aid. If I pulled at the dry skin as I had been doing, I might not only damage it, but destroy the writing under it. I could do nothing without water, and I did not know where to find any. It would be better to ride to the village of Gastford, somewhere about two miles off, put up there, and arrange for future proceedings.

I did not know the way, and for a long time could see no one to ask. The consequence was that I made a wide round, and it was nearly dark before I reached the village. I thought it better for the present to feed Lilith, and then make the best of my way home.

The next evening—I felt so like a thief that I sought the thievish security of the night—having provided myself with what was necessary, and borrowed a horse for Styles, I set out again.

## CHAPTER LXI.

### THE PARISH REGISTER.

THE sky clouded as we went; it grew very dark, and the wind began to blow. It threatened a storm. I told Styles a little of what I was about—just enough to impress on him the necessity for prudence. The wind increased, and by the time we gained the copse, it was roaring, and the slender hazels bending like a field of corn.

“You will have enough to do with two horses,” I said.

“I don't mind it, sir,” Styles answered. “A word from me will quiet Miss Lilith; and for the other, I've known him pretty well for two years past.”

I left them tolerably sheltered in the winding lane, and betook myself alone to the church. Cautiously I opened the door, and felt my way from pew to pew, for it was quite dark. I could just distinguish the windows from the walls, and nothing more. As soon as I reached the vestry, I struck a light, got down the volume, and proceeded to moisten the parchment with a wet sponge. For some time the water made little impression on the old parchment, of which but one side could be exposed to its influences, and I began to fear I should be much longer in gaining my end than I had expected. The wind roared and howled about the trembling church, which seemed too weak with age to resist such an onslaught; but when at length the

skin began to grow soft and yield to my gentle efforts at removal, I became far too much absorbed in the simple operation, which had to be performed with all the gentleness and nicety of a surgical one, to heed the uproar about me. Slowly the glutinous adhesion gave way, and slowly the writing revealed itself. In mingled hope and doubt I restrained my curiosity; and as one teases oneself sometimes by dallying with a letter of the greatest interest, not until I had folded down the parchment clear of what was manifestly an entry, did I bring my candle close to it, and set myself to read it. Then indeed I found I had reason to regard with respect the dream which had brought me thither.

Right under the 1748 of the parchment, stood on the vellum cover 1747. Then followed the usual blank, and then came an entry corresponding word for word with the other entry of my great grandfather and mother's marriage. In all probability Moldwarp Hall was mine! Little as it could do for me now, I confess to a keen pang of pleasure at the thought.

Meantime, I followed out my investigation, and gradually stripped the parchment off the vellum to within a couple of inches of the bottom of the cover. The result of knowledge was as follows.

Next to the entry of the now hardly hypothetical marriage of my ancestors, stood the summing up of the marriages of 1747, with the signature of the rector. I paused, and, turning back, counted them. Including that in which alone I was interested, I found the number given correct. Next came by itself the figures 1748, and then a few more entries, followed by the usual summing up and signature of the rector. From this I turned to the leaf of parchment: there was a difference: upon the latter the sum was six, altered to seven; on the former it was five. This of course suggested further search: I soon found where the difference indicated lay.

As the entry of *the* marriage was, on the forged leaf, shifted up close to the forged 1748, and as the summing and signature had to be omitted, because they belonged to the end of 1747, a blank would have been left, and the writing below would have shone through and attracted attention, revealing the forgery of the whole, instead of that of the part only which was intended to look a forgery. To prevent this, an altogether fictitious entry had been made—over the summing and signature. This, with the genuine entries faithfully copied, made of the five, six, which the forger had written and then blotted into a seven, intending to expose the entry of my ancestors' marriage as a forgery, while the rest of the year's register should look genuine. It took me some little trouble to clear it all up to my own mind, but by degrees everything settled into its place, and assuming an intelligible shape in virtue of its position.

With my many speculations as to why the mechanism of the forgery had assumed this shape, I need not trouble my reader. Suf-

fice it to say that on more than one supposition, I can account for it satisfactorily to myself. One other remark only will I make concerning it: I have no doubt it was an old forgery. One after another those immediately concerned in it had died, and there the falsehood lurked—in latent power—inoperative until my second visit to Umberden Church. But what differences might there not have been had it not started into activity for the brief space betwixt then and my sorrow?

I left the parchment still attached to the cover at the bottom, and, laying a sheet of paper between the formerly adhering surfaces, lest they should again adhere, closed and replaced the volume. Then, looking at my watch, I found that, instead of an hour as I had supposed, I had been in the church three hours. It was nearly eleven o'clock, too late for anything further that night.

When I came out, the sky was clear and the stars were shining. The storm had blown over. Much rain had fallen. But when the wind ceased or the rain began, I had no recollection: the storm had vanished altogether from my consciousness. I found Styles where I had left him, smoking his pipe and leaning against Lilith, who—I cannot call her *which*—was feeding on the fine grass of the lane. The horse, he had picketed near. We mounted and rode home.

The next thing was to see the rector of Umberden. He lived in his other parish, and thither I rode the following day to call upon him. I found him an old gentleman, of the squire-type of rector. As soon as he heard my name, he seemed to know who I was, and at once showed himself hospitable.

I told him that I came to him as I might, were I a Catholic, to a father-confessor. This startled him a little.

"Don't tell me anything I ought not to keep secret," he said; and it gave me confidence in him at once.

"I will not," I returned. "The secret is purely my own. Whatever crime there is in it, was past punishment long before I was born; and it was committed against, not by my family. But it is rather a long story, and I hope I shall not be tedious."

He assured me of his perfect leisure.

I told him everything, from my earliest memory, which bore on the discovery I had at length made. He soon showed signs of interest; and when I had ended the tale with the facts of the preceding night, he silently rose and walked about the room. After a few moments, he said:

"And what do you mean to do, Mr. Cumbermede?"

"Nothing," I answered, "so long as Sir Giles is alive. He was kind to me when I was a boy."

He came up behind me where I was seated, and laid his hand gently on my head; then, without a word, resumed his walk.

"And if you survive him, what then?"

"Then I must be guided partly by circumstances," I said.

"And what do you want of me?"

"I want you to go with me to the church, and see the book, that, in case of anything happening to it, you may be a witness concerning its previous contents."

"I am too old to be the only witness," he said. "You ought to have several of your own age."

"I want as few to know the secret as may be," I answered.

"You should have your lawyer one of them."

"He would never leave me alone about it," I replied; "and positively I shall take no measures at present. Some day I hope to punish him for deserting me as he did."

For I had told him how Mr. Coningham had behaved.

"Revenge, Mr. Cumbermede?"

"Not a serious one. All the punishment I hope to give him is but to show him the fact of the case, and leave him to feel as he may about it."

"There can't be much harm in that."

He reflected for a few moments, and then said:

"I will tell you what will be best. We shall go and see the book together. I will make an extract of both entries, and give a description of the state of the volume, with an account of how the second entry—or more properly the first—came to be discovered. This I shall sign in the presence of two witnesses, who need know nothing of the contents of the paper. Of that you shall yourself take charge."

We went together to the church. The old man, after making a good many objections, was at length satisfied, and made notes for his paper. He started the question whether it would not be better to secure that volume at least under lock and key. For this I thought there was no occasion—that in fact it was safer where it was, and more certain of being forthcoming when wanted. I did suggest that the key of the church might be deposited in a place of safety; but he answered that it had been kept there ever since he came to the living forty years ago, and for how long before that, he could not tell; and so a change would attract attention, and possibly make some talk in the parish, which had better be avoided.

Before the end of the week, he had his document ready. He signed it in my presence, and in that of two of his parishioners, who as witnesses appended their names and abodes. I have it now in my possession. I shall inclose it, with my great-grandfather and mother's letters—and something besides—in the packet containing this history.

That same week, Sir Giles Brotherton died.

## CHAPTER LXII.

## A FOOLISH TRIUMPH.

I SHOULD have now laid claim to my property, but for Mary. To turn Sir Geoffrey with his mother and sister out of it, would have caused me little compunction, for they would still be rich enough; I confess indeed it would have given me satisfaction. Nor could I say what real hurt of any kind it would occasion to Mary; and if I were writing for the public, instead of my one reader, I know how foolishly incredible it must appear that for her sake I should forego such claims. She would, however, I trust, have been able to believe it without the proofs which I intend to give her. The fact was simply this: I could not even for my own sake bear the thought of taking, in any manner or degree, a position if but apparently antagonistic to her. My enemy was her husband: he should reap the advantage of being her husband; for her sake he should for the present retain what was mine. So long as there should be no reason to fear his adopting a different policy from his father's in respect of his tenants, I felt myself at liberty to leave things as they were; for Sir Giles had been a good landlord, and I knew the son was regarded with favour in the county. Were he to turn out unjust or oppressive, however, then duty on my part would come in. But I must also remind my reader that I had no love for affairs; that I had an income perfectly sufficient for my wants; that, both from my habits of thought and from my sufferings, my regard was upon life itself—was indeed so far from being confined to this chrysalid beginning thereof, that I had lost all interest in this world save as the porch to the house of life. And, should I ever meet her again, in any possible future of being, how much rather would I not stand before her as one who had been even Quixotic for her sake—as one who for a hair's-breadth of her interest had felt the sacrifice of a fortune a merely natural movement of his life! She would then know not merely that I was true to her, but that I had been true in what I professed to believe when I sought her favour. And if it had been a pleasure to me—call it a weakness, and I will not oppose the impeachment;—call it self-pity, and I will confess to that as having a share in it;—but, if it had been a shadowy pleasure to me to fancy I suffered for her sake, my present resolution, while it did not add the weight of a feather to my suffering, did yet give me a similar vague satisfaction.

I must also confess to a certain satisfaction in feeling that I had power over my enemy—power of making him feel my power—power of vindicating my character against him as well, seeing one who could thus abstain from asserting his own rights could hardly have been one to invade the rights of another; but the enjoyment

of this consciousness appeared to depend on my silence: if I broke that, the strength would depart from me; but while I held my peace, I held my foe in an invisible mesh. I half deluded myself into fancying that while I kept my power over him unexercised, I retained a sort of pledge for his conduct to Mary, of which I was more than doubtful; for a man with such antecedents as his, a man who had been capable of behaving as he had behaved to Charley, was less than likely to be true to his wife: he was less than likely to treat the sister as a lady, who to the brother had been a traitorous seducer.

I have now to confess a fault as well as an imprudence—punished, I believe, in the results.

The behaviour of Mr. Coningham still rankled a little in my bosom. From Geoffrey I had never looked for anything but evil; of Mr. Coningham I had expected differently, and I began to meditate the revenge of holding him up to himself: I would punish him in a manner which, with his confidence in his business faculty, he must feel: I would simply show him how the precipitation of selfish disappointment had led him astray, and frustrated his designs. For if he had given even a decent attention to the matter, he would have found in the forgery itself hints sufficient to suggest the desirableness of further investigation.

I had not however concluded upon anything, when one day I accidentally met him, and we had a little talk about business, for he continued to look after the rent of my field. He informed me that Sir Geoffrey Brotherton had been doing all he could to get even temporary possession of the park, as we called it; and, although I said nothing of it to Mr. Coningham, my suspicion is, that, had he succeeded, he would, at the risk of a lawsuit in which he would certainly have been cast, have ploughed it up. He told me also that Clara was in poor health; she who had looked as if no blight could ever touch her, had broken down utterly. The shadow of her sorrow was plain enough on the face of her father, and his confident manner had a little yielded, although he was the old man still. His father had died a little before Sir Giles. The new baronet had not offered him the succession.

I asked him to go with me yet once more to Umberden Church—for I wanted to show him something he had overlooked in the register—not, I said, that it would be of the slightest furtherance to his former hopes. He agreed at once, already a little ashamed perhaps of the way in which he had abandoned me. Before we parted we made an appointment to meet at the church.

We went at once to the vestry. I took down the volume, and laid it before him. He opened it, with a curious look at me first. But the moment he lifted the cover, its condition at once attracted and as instantly rivetted his attention. He gave me one glance more, in which questions and remarks and exclamations numberless lay in

embryo ; then turning to the book, was presently absorbed, first in reading the genuine entry, next in comparing it with the forged one.

"Right after all !" he exclaimed at length.

"In what ?" I asked. "In dropping me without a word, as if I had been an impostor ? In forgetting that you yourself had raised in me the hopes whose discomfiture you took as a personal injury ?"

"My dear sir !" he stammered in an expostulatory tone, "you must make allowance. It was a tremendous disappointment to me."

"I cannot say I felt it quite so much myself, but at least you owed me an apology for having misled me."

"I had *not* misled you," he retorted angrily, pointing to the register.—"There !"

"You left *me* to find that out though. You took no further pains in the matter."

"How *did* you find it out ?" he asked, clutching at a change in the tone of the conversation.

I said nothing of my dream, but I told him everything else concerning the discovery. When I had finished—

"It's all plain sailing now," he cried. "There is not an obstacle in the way. I will set the thing in motion the instant I get home.—It will be a victory worth achieving !" he added, rubbing his hands.

"Mr. Coningham, I have not the slightest intention of moving in the matter," I said.

His face fell.

"You do not mean—when you hold them in your very hands—to throw away every advantage of birth and fortune, and be a nobody in the world ?"

"Infinite advantages of the kind you mean, Mr. Coningham, could make me not one whit more than I am : they *might* make me less."

"Come, come," he expostulated ; "you must not allow disappointment to upset your judgment of things."

"My judgment of things lies deeper than any disappointment I have yet had," I replied. "My uncle's teaching has at last begun to bear fruit in me."

"Your uncle was a fool !" he exclaimed.

"But for my uncle's sake, I would knock you down for daring to couple such a word with *him*."

He turned on me with a sneer. His eyes had receded in his head, and in his rage he grinned. The old ape-face, which had lurked in my memory ever since the time I first saw him, came out so plainly that I started : the child had read his face aright ! the following judgment of the man had been wrong ! the child's fear had not imprinted a false eidolon upon the growing brain.

"What right had you," he said, "to bring me all this way for such tomfoolery ?"

"I told you it would not further your wishes.—But who brought me here for nothing first ?" I added, most foolishly.

"I was myself deceived. I did not intend to deceive you."

"I know that. God forbid I should be unjust to you. But you have proved to me that your friendship was all a pretence; that your private ends were all your object. When you discovered that I could not serve those, you dropped me like a bit of glass you had taken for a diamond. Have you any right to grumble if I give you the discipline of a passing shame?"

"Mr. Cumbermede," he said, through his teeth, "you will repent this."

I gave him no answer, and he left the church in haste. Having replaced the register, I was following at my leisure, when I heard sounds that made me hurry to the door. Lilith was plunging and rearing and pulling at the bridle which I had thrown over one of the spiked bars of the gate. Another moment and she must have broken loose, or dragged the gate upon her—more likely the latter, for the bridle was a new one with broad reins—when some frightful injury would in all probability have been the consequence to herself. But a word from me quieted her, and she stood till I came up. Every inch of her was trembling. I suspected at once, and in a moment discovered plainly that Mr. Coningham had struck her with his whip: there was a big weal on the fine skin of her hip and across her croup. She shrunk like a hurt child when my hand approached the injured part, but moved neither hoof nor head.

Having patted and petted and consoled her a little, I mounted and rode after Mr. Coningham. Nor was it difficult to overtake him, for he was going a footpace. He was stooping in his saddle, and when I drew near, I saw that he was looking very pale. I did not, however, suspect that he was in pain.

"It was a cowardly thing to strike the poor dumb animal!" I cried.

"You would have struck her yourself," he answered with a curse, "if she had broken your leg."

I rode nearer. I knew well enough that she would not have kicked him if he had not struck her first; and I could see that his leg was not broken; but evidently he was in great suffering.

"I am very sorry," I said. "Can I help you?"

"Go to the devil!" he groaned.

I am ashamed to say the answer made me so angry that I spoke the truth.

"Don't suppose you deceive me," I said. "I know well enough my mare did not kick you before you struck her. Then she lashed out, of course."

I waited for no reply, but turned and rode back to the church the door of which, in my haste, I had left open. I locked it, replaced the key, and then rode quietly home.

But as I went, I began to feel that I had done wrong. No doubt, Mr. Coningham deserved it, but the law was not in my hands. No man has a right to *punish* another. Vengeance belongs to a higher



region, and the vengeance of God is a very different thing from the vengeance of man. However it may be softened with the name of retribution, revenge runs into all our notions of justice ; and until we love purely, so it must ever be.

All I had gained was self-rebuke, and another enemy. Having reached home, I read the Manual of Epictetus right through before I laid it down, and, if it did not teach me to love my enemies, it taught me at least to be ashamed of myself. Then I wrote to Mr. Coningham, saying I was sorry I had spoken to him as I did, and begging him to let by-gones be by-gones ; assuring him that if ever I moved in the matter of our difference, he should be the first to whom I applied for assistance.

He returned me no answer.

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### CHAPTER LXIII.

#### A COLLISION.

AND now came a dreary time of reaction. There seemed nothing left for me to do, and I felt listless and weary. Something kept urging me to get away and hide myself, and I soon made up my mind to yield to the impulse and go abroad. My intention was to avoid cities, and, wandering from village to village, lay my soul bare to the healing influences of nature. As to any healing in the power of Time, I despised the old bald-pate as a quack who performed his seeming cures at the expense of the whole body. The better cures attributed to him are not his at all, but produced by the operative causes whose servant he is. A thousand holy balms require his services for their full action, but they, and not he, are the saving powers. Along with Time I ranked, and with absolute hatred shrunk from, all those means which offered to cure me by making me forget. From a child, I had a horror of forgetting ; it always seemed to me like a loss of being, like a hollow scooped out of my very existence—almost like the loss of identity. At times I even shrunk from going to sleep, so much did it seem like yielding to an absolute death—a death so deep that the visible death is but a picture or type of it. If I could have been sure of dreaming, it would have been different, but in the uncertainty it seemed like consenting to nothingness. That one who thus felt should ever have been tempted to suicide, will reveal how painful if not valueless his thoughts and feelings—his conscious life—must have grown to him ; and that the only thing which withheld him from it should be the fear that no death, but a more intense life might be the result, will reveal it yet more clearly. That in that sleep I might at least dream—there was the rub.

All such relief, in a word, as might come of a lowering of my life, either physically, morally, or spiritually, I hated, detested, despised. The man who finds solace for a wounded heart in self-indulgence,

may indeed be *capable* of angelic virtues, but in the meantime his conduct is that of the devils who went into the swine rather than be bodiless. The man who can thus be consoled for the loss of a woman, could never have been worthy of her, possibly would not have remained true to her beyond the first delights of possession. The relief to which I could open my door, must be such alone as would operate through the enlarging and elevating of what I recognized as *myself*. Whatever would make me greater, so that my torture, intensified it might well be, should yet have room to dash itself hither and thither without injuring the walls of my being, would be welcome. If I might become so great that, my grief yet stinging me to agony, the infinite *I* of me should remain pure and calm, God-loving and man-cherishing, then I should be saved. God might be able to do more for me—I could not tell: I looked for no more. I would myself be such as to inclose my pain in a mighty sphere of out-spacing life, in relation to which even such sorrow as mine should be but a little thing. Such deliverance alone, I say, could I consent with myself to accept, and such alone, I believed, would God offer me—for such alone seemed worthy of him, and such alone seemed not unworthy of me.

The help that Nature could give me, I judged to be of this ennobling kind. For either Nature was nature in virtue of having being born (*nata*) of God, or she was but a phantasm of my own brain—against which supposition the nature in me protested with the agony of a tortured man. To Nature then I would go. Like the hurt child who folds himself in the skirt of his mother's velvet garment, I would fold myself in the robe of Deity.

But to give honour and gratitude where both are due, I must here confess obligation with a willing and thankful heart. The "Excursion" of Wordsworth was published ere I was born, but only since I left college had I made acquaintance with it: so long does it take for the light of a new star to reach a distant world! To this book I owe so much that to me it would alone justify the conviction that Wordsworth will never be forgotten. That he is no longer the fashion, militates nothing against his reputation. We, the old ones, hold fast by him for no sentimental reminiscence of the fashion of our youth, but simply because his humanity has come into contact with ours. The men of the new generation have their new loves and worships: it remains to be seen to whom the worthy amongst them will turn long ere the frosts of age begin to gather and the winds of the human autumn to blow. Wordsworth will recede through the gliding ages until with the greater Chaucer, and the greater Shakspeare, and the greater Milton, he is yet a star in the constellated crown of England.

Before I was able to leave home, however, a new event occurred.

I received an anonymous letter, in a handwriting I did not recognize. Its contents were as follows:—

"Sir,—Treachery is intended you. If you have anything worth watching, *watch it*."

For one moment—so few were the places in which through my possessions I was vulnerable—I fancied the warning might point to Lilith, but I soon dismissed the idea. I could make no enquiries, for it had been left an hour before my return from a stroll by an unknown messenger. I could think of nothing besides but the register, and if this was what my correspondent aimed at, I had less reason to be anxious concerning it, because of the attested copy, than my informant probably knew. Still its safety was far from being a matter of indifference to me. I resolved to ride over to Umberden Church and see if it was as I had left it.

The twilight was fast thickening into darkness when I entered the gloomy building. There was light enough, however, to guide my hand to the right volume, and by carrying it to the door I was able to satisfy myself that it was as I had left it.

Thinking over the matter once more as I stood, I could not help wishing that the book were out of danger just for the present; but there was hardly a place in the bare church where it was possible to conceal it. At last I thought of one—half groped my way to the pulpit, ascended its creaking stair, lifted the cushion of the seat, and laid the book, which was thin, open in the middle, and flat on its face, under it. I then locked the door, mounted, and rode off.

It was now more than dusk. Lilith was frolicsome, and, rejoicing in the grass under her feet, broke into a quick canter along the noiseless, winding lane. Suddenly there was a great shock, and I lay senseless.

I came to myself under the stinging blows of a whip, only afterwards recognized as such however. I sprang staggering to my feet, and rushed at the dim form of an assailant, with such a sudden and I suppose unexpected assault that he fell under me. Had he not fallen I should have had little chance with him, for, as I now learned by his voice, it was Sir Geoffrey Brotherton.

"Thief! Swindler! Sneak!" he cried, making a last harmless blow at me as he fell.

All the wild beast in my nature was roused. I had no weapon—not even a whip, for Lilith never needed one. It was well, for what I might have done in the first rush of blood to my reviving brain, I dare hardly imagine. I seized him by the throat with such fury that, though far the stronger, he had no chance as he lay. I kneeled on his chest. He struggled furiously, but could not force my gripe from his throat. I soon perceived that I was strangling him, and tightened my grasp.

His efforts were already growing feebler, when I became aware of a soft touch apparently trying to take hold of my hair. Glancing up without relaxing my hold, I saw the white head of Lilith close

to mine. Was it the whiteness—was it the calmness of the creature—I cannot pretend to account for the fact, but the same instant before my mind's eye rose the vision of one standing speechless before his accusers, bearing on his form the marks of ruthless blows. I did not then remember that just before I came out I had been gazing, as I often gazed, upon an *Ecce Homo* of Albert Dürer's that hung in my room. Immediately my heart awoke within me. My whole being still trembling with passionate struggle and gratified hate, a rush of human pity swept across it. I took my hand from my enemy's throat, rose, withdrew some paces, and burst into tears. I could have embraced him, but I dared not even minister to him, for the insult it would appear. He did not at once rise, and when he did, he stood for a few moments, half-unconscious, I think, staring at me. Coming to himself, he felt for and found his whip—I thought with the intention of attacking me again, but he moved towards his horse, which was quietly eating the grass now wet with dew. Gathering its bridle from around its leg, he mounted, and rode back the way he had come.

I lingered for a while utterly exhausted. I was trembling in every limb. The moon rose and began to shed her low yellow light over the hazel copse, filling the lane with brightness and shadow. Lilith, seeming in her whiteness to gather a tenfold share of the light upon herself, was now feeding as gently as if she had known nothing of the strife, and I congratulated myself that the fall had not injured her. But as she took a step forward in her feeding, I discovered to my dismay that she was quite lame. For my own part I was now feeling the ache of numerous and severe bruises. When I took Lilith by the bridle to lead her away, I found that neither of us could manage more than two miles an hour. I was very uneasy about her. There was nothing for it however but make the best of our way to Gastford. It was no little satisfaction to think as we hobbled along, that the accident had happened through no carelessness of mine beyond that of cantering in the dark, for I was on my own side of the road. Had Geoffrey been on his, narrow as the lane was, we might have passed without injury.

It was so late when we reached Gastford, that we had to rouse the ostler before I could get Lilith attended to. I bathed the injured leg, of which the shoulder seemed wrenched; and having fed her, but less plentifully than usual, I left her to her repose. In the morning she was considerably better, but I resolved to leave her where she was, and, sending a messenger for Styles to come and attend to her, I hired a gig, and went to call on my new friend the rector of Umberden.

I told him all that had happened, and where I had left the volume. He said he would have a chest made in which to secure the whole register, and, meanwhile, would himself go to the church and bring that volume home with him. It is safe enough now, as any one may find who wishes to see it—though the old man has long passed away.

Lilith remained at Gastford a week before I judged it safe for her to come home. The injury however turned out to be a not very serious one.

Why should I write of my poor mare—but that she was once hers for whose hoped perusal I am writing this? No, there is even a better reason: I shall never, to all my eternity, forget, even if I should never see her again, which I do not for a moment believe, what she did for me that evening. Surely she deserves to appear in her own place in my story!

Of course I was exercised in my mind as to who had sent me the warning. There could be no more doubt that I had hit what it intended, and had possibly preserved the register from being once more tampered with. I could think only of one. I have never had an opportunity of inquiring, and for her sake I should never have asked the question, but I have little doubt it was Clara. Who else could have had a chance of making the discovery, and at the same time would have cared to let me know it? Also she would have cogent reason for keeping such a part in the affair a secret. Probably she had heard her father informing Geoffrey; but he might have done so with no worse intention than had informed his previous policy.

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#### CHAPTER LXIV.

##### YET ONCE.

I AM drawing my story to a close. Almost all that followed bears so exclusively upon my internal history, that I will write but one incident more of it. I have roamed the world, and reaped many harvests. In the deepest agony I have never refused the consolations of Nature or of Truth. I have never knowingly accepted any founded in falsehood, in forgetfulness, or in distraction. Let such as have no hope in God drink of what Lethe they can find; to me it is a river of Hell and altogether abominable. I could not be content even to forget my sins. There can be but one deliverance from them, namely, that God and they should come together in my soul. In his presence I shall serenely face them. Without him I dare not think of them. With God a man can confront anything; without God, he is but the withered straw which the sickle of the reaper has left standing on a wintry field. But to forget them would be to cease and begin anew, which to one aware of his immortality is a horror.

If comfort profound as the ocean has not yet overtaken and in-folded me, I see how such may come—perhaps will come. It must be by the enlarging of my whole being in truth, in God, so as to give room for the storm to rage yet not destroy; for the sorrow to brood yet not kill; for the sunshine of love to return after the east wind and black frost of bitterest disappointment; for the heart to

feel the uttermost tenderness while the arms go not forth to embrace ; for a mighty heaven of the unknown, crowded with the stars of endless possibilities, to dawn when the sun of love has vanished, and the moon of its memory is too ghastly to give any light : it is comfort such and thence that I think will one day possess me. Already has not its aurora brightened the tops of my snow-covered mountains ? And if yet my valleys lie gloomy and forlorn, is not light on the loneliest peak a sure promise of the coming day ?

Only once again have I looked in Mary's face. I will record the occasion, and then drop my pen.

About five years after I left home, I happened in my wanderings to be in one of my favourite Swiss valleys—high and yet sheltered. I rejoiced to be far up in the mountains, yet behold the inaccessible peaks above me—mine, though not to be trodden by foot of mine—my heart's own, though never to yield me a moment's outlook from their lofty brows ; for I was never strong enough to reach one mighty summit. It was enough for me that they sent me down the glad streams from the cold bosoms of their glaciers—the offspring of the sun and the snow ; that I too beheld the stars to which they were nearer than I.

One lovely morning, I had wandered a good way from the village—a place little frequented by visitors, where I had a lodging in the house of the syndic—when I was overtaken by one of the sudden fogs which so frequently render those upper regions dangerous. There was no path to guide me back to my temporary home, but, a hundred yards or so beneath where I had been sitting, lay that which led down to one of the best known villages of the canton, where I could easily find shelter. I made haste to descend.

After a couple of hours' walking, during which the fog kept following me, as if hunting me from its lair, I at length arrived at the level of the valley, and was soon in one of those large hotels which in the summer are crowded as bee-hives, and in the winter forsaken as a ruin. The season for travellers was drawing to a close, and the house was full of homeward-bound guests.

For the mountains will endure but a season of intrusion. If travellers linger too long within their hospitable gates, their humour changes, and, with fierce winds and snow and bitter sleet, they will drive them forth, preserving their winter privacy for the bosom friends of their mistress, Nature. Many is the winter since those of my boyhood which I have spent amongst the Alps ; and in such solitude I have ever found the negation of all solitude, the one absolute Presence. David communed with his own heart on his bed and was still—there finding God : communing with my own heart in the winter-valleys of Switzerland I found at least what made me cry out : "Surely this is the house of God ; this is the gate of heaven !" I would not be supposed to fancy that God is in mountains and not in plains—that God is in the solitude and not in the city : in any region

harmonious with its condition and necessities, it is easier for the heart to be still, and in its stillness to hear the still small voice.

Dinner was going on at the *table d'hôte*. It was full, but a place was found for me in a bay window. Turning to the one side, I belonged to the great world, represented by the Germans, Americans, and English, with a Frenchman and Italian here and there, filling the long table; turning to the other, I knew myself in a temple of the Most High, so huge that it seemed empty of men. The great altar of a mighty mountain rose, massy as a world, and ethereal as a thought, into the upturned gulf of the twilight air—its snowy peak, ever as I turned to look, mounting up and up to its repose. I had been playing with my own soul, spinning it between the sun and the moon as it were, and watching now the golden and now the silvery side, as I glanced from the mountain to the table and again from the table to the mountain, when all at once I discovered that I was searching the mountain for something—I did not know what. Whether any tones had reached me, I cannot tell;—a man's mind may, even through his senses, be marvellously moved without knowing whence the influence comes;—but there I was searching the face of the mountain for something, with a want which had not begun to explain itself. From base to peak my eyes went flitting and resting and wandering again upwards. At last they reached the snowy crown, from which they fell into the infinite blue beyond. Then, suddenly, the unknown something I wanted was clear. The same moment, I turned to the table. Almost opposite was a face—pallid, with parted lips and fixed eyes—gazing at me. Then I knew those eyes had been gazing at me all the time I had been searching the face of the mountain. For one moment they met mine and rested; for one moment, I felt as if I must throw myself at her feet, and clasp them to my heart; but she turned her eyes away, and I rose and left the house.

The mist was gone, and the moon was rising. I walked up the mountain path towards my village. But long ere I reached it, the sun was rising; with his first arrow of slenderest light, the tossing waves of my spirit began to lose their white tops, and sink again towards a distant calm; and ere I saw the village from the first point of vision, I had made the following verses. They are the last I will set down.

I know that I cannot move thee  
To an echo of my pain,  
Or a thrill of the storming trouble  
That racks my soul and brain;

That our hearts through all the ages  
Shall never sound in tune;  
That they meet no more in their cycles  
Than the parted sun and moon.

But if ever a spirit flashes  
Itself on another soul,

One day, in thy stillness, a vapour  
Shall round about thee roll ;

And the lifting of the vapour  
Shall reveal a world of pain,  
Of frosted suns, and moons that wander  
Through misty mountains of rain.

Thou shalt know me for one live instant—  
Thou shalt know me—and yet not love :  
I would not have thee troubled,  
My cold, white-feathered dove.

I would only once come near thee—  
Myself, and not my form ;  
Then away in the distance wander,  
A slow-dissolving storm.

The vision should pass in vapour,  
That melt in æther again ;  
Only a something linger—  
Not pain, but the shadow of pain.

And I should know that thy spirit  
On mine one look had sent ;  
And glide away from thy knowledge,  
And try to be half-content.

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## CHAPTER LXV.

### CONCLUSION.

THE ebbing tide that leaves bare the shore, swells the heaps of the central sea. The tide of life ebbs from this body of mine, soon to lie on the shore of life like a stranded wreck ; but the murmur of the waters that break upon no strand is in my ears ; to join the waters of the infinite life, mine is ebbing away.

Whatever has been his will is well—grandly well—well even for that in me which feared, and in those very respects in which it feared that it might not be well. The whole being of me past and present shall say : it is infinitely well, and I would not have it otherwise. Rather than it should not be as it is, I would go back to the world and this body of which I grew weary, and encounter yet again all that met me on my journey. Yes—final submission of my will to the All-will—I would meet it *knowing what was coming*. Lord of me, Father of Jesus Christ, will this suffice ? Is my faith enough yet ? I say it, not having beheld what thou hast in store—not knowing what I shall be—not even absolutely certain that thou art—confident only that, if thou be, such thou must be.

The last struggle is before me. But I have passed already through so many valleys of death itself, where the darkness was not only palpable, but choking and stinging, that I cannot greatly fear that which holds but the shadow of death. For what men call death, is but its shadow. Death never comes near us ; it lies behind the back of



God; he is between it and us. If he were to turn his back upon us, the death which no imagination can shadow forth, would lap itself around us, and we should be—we should not know what.

At night I lie wondering how it will feel; and, but that God will be with me, I would rather be slain suddenly, than lie still and await the change. The growing weakness, ushered in, it may be, by long agony; the alienation from things about me, while I am yet amidst them; the slow rending of the bonds which make this body a home, so that it turns half alien, while yet some bonds unsevered hold the live thing fluttering in its worm-eaten cage—but God knows me and my house, and I need not speculate or forebode. When it comes, death will prove as natural as birth. Bethink thee, Lord—nay, thou never forgettest. It is because thou thinkest and feelest that I think and feel; it is on thy deeper consciousness that mine ever floats; thou knowest my frame, and rememberest that I am dust: do with me as thou wilt. Let me take centuries to die if so thou wilt, for thou wilt be with me. Only if an hour should come when thou must seem to forsake me, watch me all the time, lest self-pity should awake, and I should cry that thou wast dealing hardly with me. For when thou hidest thy face, the world is a corpse, and I am a live soul fainting within it.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thus far had I written, and was about to close with certain words of Job which are to me like the trumpet of the resurrection, when the news reached me that Sir Geoffrey Brotherton was dead. He leaves no children, and the property is expected to pass to a distant branch of the family. Mary will have to leave Moldwarp Hall.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have been up to London to my friend Marston—for it is years since Mr. Coningham died. I have laid everything before him, and left the affair in his hands. He is so confident in my cause, that he offers, in case my means should fail me, to find what is necessary himself; but he is almost as confident of a speedy settlement.

And now, for the first time in my life, I am about—shall I say, to court society? At least I am going to London, about to give and receive invitations, and cultivate the acquaintance of those whose appearance and conversation attract me.

I have not a single relative, to my knowledge, in the world, and I am free, beyond question, to leave whatever property I have or may have to whomsoever I please.

My design is this: if I succeed in my suit, I will offer Moldwarp to Mary for her lifetime. She is greatly beloved in the county, and has done much for the labourers, nor upon her own lands only. If she had the full power she would do yet better. But of course it is very doubtful whether she will accept it. Should she decline it, I shall try to manage it myself—leaving it to her, with reversion to the man, whoever he may be, whom I shall choose to succeed her.

What sort of man I shall endeavour to find, I think my reader will understand. I will not describe him, beyond saying that he must above all things be just, generous, and free from the petty prejudices of the country gentleman. He must understand that property involves service to every human soul that lives or labours upon it—the service of the elder brother to his less burdened yet more enduring and more helpless brothers and sisters ; that for the lives of all such he has in his degree to render account. For surely God never meant to uplift any man *at the expense* of his fellows ; but to uplift him that he might be strong to minister, as a wise friend and ruler, to their highest and best needs—first of all by giving them the justice which will be recognized as such by him before whom a man is his brother's keeper, and becomes a Cain in denying it.

Lest Lady Brotherton, however, should like to have something to give away, I leave my former will as it was. It is in Marston's hands.

\* \* \* \* \*

Would I marry her now, if I might ? I cannot tell. The thought rouses no passionate flood within me. Mighty spaces of endless possibility and endless result open before me. Death is knocking at my door.—

No—no ; I will be honest, and lay it to no half reasons, however wise.—I would rather meet her then first, when she is clothed in that new garment called by St. Paul the spiritual body. That, Geoffrey has never touched ; over that he has no claim.

But if the loveliness of her character should have purified his, and drawn and bound his soul to hers ?

Father, fold me in thyself. The storm so long still, awakes ; once more it flutters its fierce pinions. Let it not swing itself aloft in the air of my spirit. I dare not think, not merely lest thought should kindle into agony, but lest I should fail to rejoice over the lost and found. But my heart is in thy hand. Need I school myself to bow to an imagined decree of thine ? Is it not enough that, when I shall know a thing for thy will, I shall then be able to say : Thy will be done ? It is not enough ; I need more. School thou my heart so to love thy will, that in all calmness I leave to think what may or may not be its choice, and rest in its holy self.

\* \* \* \* \*

She has sent for me. I go to her. I will not think beforehand what I shall say.

Something within tells me that a word from her would explain all that sometimes even now seems so inexplicable as hers. Will she speak that word ? Shall I pray her for that word ? I know nothing. The pure Will be done !

## JERSEY.

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THE visit which we (X., Y., and Z.) paid to Jersey was the wind-up of a holiday, the greater part of which was spent in Normandy; our object being to see whether we should sufficiently care for the place to go to it a second time, and for a more lengthened stay. We had long desired to see something of the Channel Islands; but from the nearest English point of view they seem a long way off. The passage is proverbially a rough one, and takes from nine to twelve hours on board the steamer. So, finding that, by payment of an extra eight shillings each, our return tickets from Southampton to Havre, St. Malo, Granville, or Cherbourg were also available from Jersey, we made up our minds to spend a few days there on our way home, and started one morning by the steamer *Alice* from St. Malo.

The previous night had been stormy, and the short waves of a deep green, crested with white foam, dashed noisily against the numerous rocky projections, through which our way was steered while steaming out of the picturesque old port of St. Malo.

One by one the little islands grew smaller, the fortifications standing on some of them faded away, and we were regularly "at sea." After this a by no means rare peculiarity of my bodily organisation unfortunately prevents me from saying whether there is anything more to be seen; at all events, I saw nothing more until we were alongside the pier at St. Helier's, where we were to land.

Cabs, omnibuses, and flies stand in waiting to take travellers and their luggage to the different hotels. Idlers in pretty, gay dresses, in yachting-suits and uniforms, mingle with those in less attractive garments, all eagerly watching the new arrivals. We had been recommended to go to the Imperial Hotel, and thither we drove; and, after what seemed an interminable jolting through streets and roads, we reached the mistakenly-placed erection. It is one of those large handsome buildings, which belong to a company, has no proper master or mistress, and where everything is done on such a large scale that one is oppressed by a sense of one's own insignificance. These are its general faults; its particular one is, that in a place where most people go to be near the sea, it is not within sight nor even moderate walking distance of it. The charges are 10s. per head daily, and this entitled us to a bed-room, an exceedingly substantial breakfast, a meat luncheon, a not over-plentiful nor well-arranged dinner, tea or coffee, and the use of a general drawing-room

and reading-room, well supplied with newspapers. But we wanted the sea ; and, therefore, started as early as possible the morning after our arrival, to ascertain how we could best obtain a dwelling near to the desired element.

Seeing that almost every house we passed had a notice of lodgings to let, we decided that if we could find any vacant in a locality that pleased us, we would take apartments in preference to staying at a hotel. Havre-des-Pas was the part we were recommended to, and no sooner did we emerge out of Roseville Street, and catch sight of the magnificent sea, which came rolling into the bay, than we agreed that, if possible, this was the place to pitch our tents in. There were not very many houses near, but, after a little inquiry, we came upon the very thing we wanted—a bright house, with a nicely-furnished drawing-room, and two comfortable bed-rooms, all on one floor. The windows commanded a perfect view of St. Clement's Bay, while stretching away inland were corn-fields, green meadows, and clumps of trees sheltering pretty country-houses. On inquiring for terms, the landlady told us rather dubiously that she *had* been getting 26s. a week for the rooms, but that would include everything—there would be no extras ; and so it proved, for, agreeing to her request at once, we had everything excellently cooked and scrupulously clean, were attentively served and pleasantly waited upon, for 26s. a-week. And, while on the subject of lodgings, I may as well say, that throughout the island they seem wonderfully cheap. One lady told me she had three excellent rooms for 20s. a week ; and while looking for those apartments, she had been offered some for 18s. and 15s. ; these were near the water, but had no sea-view. I could but think, what a delightful place this is for people not overburdened with money to bring a family of children to ;—excellent bathing, miles of sand and rocks to scramble over, and provisions good and moderate to satisfy the healthy appetites they would be sure to return with. How preferable to most of the over-crowded watering-places, with their pokey rooms and exorbitant prices !

In purchasing anything in Jersey, one must always bear in mind that one gets thirteen pennies for the English shilling, and that the weights are somewhat in excess of our own. Meat is very little cheaper than it is in London ; it averages 11d. and 1s. the pound, but it is neither so well trimmed nor so good as London meat. Of course, I am giving a stranger's experience to those who, if they went, would doubtless be treated as I was. Fowls—not chickens—were 2s. 6d. each ; ducks, 5s. 6d. the couple. The vegetables were excellent, and just half the price of those we get in London ; the fruit not so cheap in proportion, but very good.

The market of St. Helier's is quite a sight. Comely matrons and pretty, bright girls, each with a useful-sized canoe-shaped basket,

buying and bargaining for their household wants ; while behind the stalls sit the half-foreign looking market-women, answering their customers in queer-sounding broken English, and gossiping together in as queer-sounding Jersey-French. Besides this market there is a fish-market, and a market for the sale of French provisions.

The principal streets of St. Helier's are clean, tolerably wide, and full of well-stocked shops of every description. There is an indescribable air of freshness and gaiety about the place and the people, and I know of few towns which struck me as looking so clean and thriving. It is quite pleasant to go into a shop, the people are so obliging, and ready to give you any information you may desire ; and the many pretty faces usually to be found inside impel one to linger and prosecute inquiries. After the shops are closed, the streets seem to become a regular promenade, but all is orderly, and every one is out with the apparent intention of enjoyment.

Finding there was a railway to St. Aubin's, one of our first excursions was by it, and very much we enjoyed our short journey. The carriages are comfortable and of the usual size ; but outside them is sufficient space railed on each side to admit of a person walking the entire length of the train, and so enjoying the sea, which the line skirts the whole distance. As there are several stations between St. Helier's and St. Aubin's, this arrangement prevents the necessity of having a long platform and the awkwardness of descending should your carriage be drawn up beyond it. Arrived at St. Aubin's, which, compared with St. Helier's, is a mere village, but most charmingly situated, we set off for a long walk across some high land, and down to St. Brelade's Bay. The day was warm ; but the lanes are everywhere well shaded, and, once upon the hill-top, the breeze came cool and fresh ; the corn looked thick, and its golden hue was becoming deeper and more burnished. Farther on we crossed heath, low brambles, and thick sedge grass, through which large green lizards glided away at our approach, and then we gradually descended to the bay, stopping at the garden of a farmhouse to stare in wonderment at, what appeared to us, a group of Brobdiagnagian cabbages. From these are made the famous cabbage-sticks, which we were told are peculiar to the island. They seem to be grown by every one, and look, and in fact are, a large-leaved, tough, coarse kind of cabbage, with stalks varying from three to four feet. When converted into sticks, they are sold for 1s. each, and a brisk trade must be driven in them, as the shopkeeper, of whom Y. bought some, told him he had sold more than two thousand that season.

All the sea-views around Jersey are so beautiful, that no description can in any way convey an idea of them, nor would a picture do them justice. The colour of the sea seems to vary with each passing cloud, the rocks that at one hour look purple, at another look grey—thus you never seem to view the same scene twice ; for a rising storm, or

a dazzling sun will at once change the whole aspect of the landscape. Returning to St. Aubin's, we walked through the grounds of Noirmont Manor, one of the most picturesquely-situated houses I have ever seen, with grounds sloping down to the very water's edge, and art so skilfully dovetailed into nature, that it is hard to say where one ends and the other begins. We passed many other pretty houses of smaller pretension, all with gardens gay with flowers—fuchsias, myrtles, and roses twining up about them after the fashion one sees in some parts of Devonshire. I am not sure but that I should give the preference for a long stay to St. Aubin's rather than to St. Helier's, only the latter place affords far greater facilities for seeing the whole island. This may be accomplished in six days, at the rate of twenty miles a day (of course, a certain portion of the ground is retraced during these six excursions), and for the absurdly moderate charge of 2s. each person. A list of these pleasure-trips is left at most of the lodging-houses, and from it you make choice of what places you wish to see. We chose to pay a visit to the caves of Grève-de-Lecq, and started off at ten o'clock one morning for the office of the Royal Blue Excursion Cars. These cars are long open conveyances, with six rows of seats cross-wise, each wide enough to seat five persons. They are drawn by four horses, and are sufficiently high to admit of one seeing over all obstacles in the form of high walls and hedges. Three of these cars started, all tolerably well filled with people, who were evidently, like ourselves, strangers to the place. With us went a guide, to point out the various places of interest we passed. He was a most amusing person, and indefatigable in his efforts to promote the cheerfulness of the party, going from one car to the other, repeating jokes, telling stories, and giving riddles. I fear he was not at all appreciated by several of his hearers; but he amused us considerably, and when Y., in return, told him one or two fresh things, he laughed with a heartiness that showed he had a lively sense of humour.

We reached Grève-de-Lecq about one o'clock, and found an excellent luncheon provided in a long room built opposite the small hotel, for the accommodation of pleasure-parties. Here were set before us chicken, ham, cold joints of every description, delicious lobster, and salad, for 2s. 6d.; and, having refreshed ourselves from this liberal *menu*, we started to see the soldiers, who were encamped on the heights, and then to wander about until our guide should be ready to conduct us to the caves, which are only to be seen at low water. The day was very warm, and the hill exceedingly steep, causing X. (who occasionally would remind us that she was not so young as she used to be) to stand somewhat breathless on the first flat big enough to allow a tent to be pitched, in front of which was lying a young officer, who, divining the envious glance poor X. cast upon his comfortable ease, good-naturedly jumped up, and asked her if would she like to rest there. The view was lovely,

the breeze delicious, the young officer had lots of cushions, and, before we had time to debate, X. was seated. She was easily persuaded that to go to the caves would be for her a most fatiguing expedition, and that the best plan, if Y. and myself were bent on seeing them, was not to wait for the excursion guide, but to trust ourselves to a soldier standing near, while our new acquaintance would entertain her until our return. And, certainly, we can never thank him enough for his kindness; for what we should have done with any one not able to jump, slide, and scramble up and down, I knew not. We descended by a jagged rock covered with short slippery grass; then a bare projection, down which the man told us to drop. This was sufficiently difficult for Y. and him, but, as for me, I hung in mid-air, and had finally to drop with the hope of perching my feet on poor Y.'s shoulders. "There ain't much more of this sort o' thing," said our cheery guide; "we'll soon be at the cave's mouth now." Whereupon I made a final effort at dashing myself to pieces, and was landed on a sharp rock, one among many bigger and sharper still, which were piled together under the shadow of the overhanging cliffs, and beaten against by a noisy dash of sea waves.

"We must look sharp, or the tide 'll overtake us," said our guide, emerging from a hole into which he had been peering, while I was taking in my surroundings and a little fresh courage, which Y. was endeavouring to impart to me.

"Where are we to go?" asked Y.

"In here," said the soldier, pointing to the place he had been inspecting.

"What, that hole?" cried I, in dismay.

"Ah, it isn't so bad as it looks," replied our friend. "Besides," he added, as a clincher to his inducements, "ye can't go back; and if we stand here much longer, we'll have the tide upon us."

So there was nothing more to be said, and bending down until we were almost on our hands and knees, we crawled into a dark tunnel, the water dripping on us from the top and sides, the whole way almost blocked up with stones and pieces of rock, varying in size and shape, over which we had to step or climb. At length we were told to sit down on a stone higher and more pointed than the rest, and turn ourselves round, and, to my delight, for the first time I beheld a glimmer of light, by which I knew we were nearing the other end. In a few minutes more we were sitting on a beach of goodly-sized pebbles, I all but exhausted by the exertion I had undergone. Our fellow-labourer, however, urged us to proceed, as we could hear the voices of the excursion guide and his party close after us.

The only ascent is by irregular and half-worn steps cut in the face of a perpendicular rock, and up these, step by step, Y. and our conductor hoisted and dragged me until the top was at last reached, and our perils were over.

I have done the usual amount of climbing of ordinary Swiss tourists, have ascended Scotch and Welsh mountains, but certainly I never came across a more ugly bit; and both Y. and our friend the soldier agreed with me that it would be but right to warn people, as a false step or a sudden giddiness would prove serious, if not fatal.

Familiarity had evidently made the Royal Blue Guide (or R. B. G., as he called himself) lose sight of the perils into which he was leading his followers, and as we sat resting on the top we could hear his cheery voice calling out encouragingly, "This way, gentlemen! Higher up! higher up!"

"Higher up, indeed!" exclaimed a rather portly member of the party, sinking down near us; "he ought to be prosecuted for bringing people to such a place."

"Is it on the top I am?" said an evidently raw recruit, whose face and coat were about the same shade of colour. "Shure, bad luck to me if I'm iver cotched crawlin' through that hole agin'."

"Why, Pat, I thought you'd bin in once before?" said our conductor.

"Well, I did go in, but I didn't come out, for the cause that I took down a candle with me, and when I got two or three steps on, me foot slipped from under me, and I fell, and just squelched out the light, and there I was, not knowin' what I'd do or what would happen to me, for I was all alone, ye see; but I managed to slider back, and get up again, and I've niver bin since, barrin' to-day, and be jabers, I've had enuf o' the world's inside to last me me life."

After assuring himself that his party were all safely up, the guide joined us; but he only laughed at our remonstrances, saying we should find it do us all the good in the world. He did generally tell the ladies that it was a stiffish bit, but a good many were only the more anxious to go after they heard that, and he took care they came back safe. "So far so good;" but unless you are strong in head, body, and breath, take my advice, and be contented with the really splendid view from the heights above. Standing on them, you can see the island of Sark—a place, judging from the photographs of it, well worth a day's visit, and to which, in the summer time, steamers constantly make excursions. The French coast, near Cherbourg, is also visible, and on the rocks below, the sea, restless and tossing even on a calm day, beats a constant splash-plash. X's obliging entertainer told us that a storm there was a grand sight, though rather trying to those under canvas, as during the last one his tent had been blown away, and his bed soaked with water, and he left to spend the remainder of the night as best he could. He only laughed at these small calamities, however, seeming to be one of those happy individuals who remember only the pleasant incidents of life. We were very sorry to say good-bye to him, and X. had



much to tell us of the German campaign, through which, as one of the Irish brigade, he had gone.

We returned home by a different road, through most lovely lanes, arched by trees. The Jersey lanes are wonderfully pretty, and excited our admiration whenever we turned into one; when closed in by high hedges, which are a tangle of brushwood and wild flowers, with thick trees shading the sun and softening down the light, it is impossible to realise that you are quite close to the sea, and that you will probably emerge on a road only separated by a rough embankment from a splendid beach. This constant and varied change of scenery I think constitutes the great charm of Jersey.

St. Clement's Bay, which, from being close to our lodgings, was the one I became best acquainted with, is carpeted with fine soft sand, spreading out and around a very forest of fantastically-shaped rocks, which are completely hidden at high water. On the beach stands a sufficient supply of bathing-machines, and a small establishment for hot and cold baths. Public bathing is conducted on the same plan as in England; the only restrictions applying to time, and not to any especial costume, as in France; indeed, the absence of the French element in a place where twenty years ago almost every family talked in Jersey-French, is very noticeable. Fashions are set forth as "worn in London;" and advertisements of English goods are remarkably prominent. I tried to procure several articles in the shape of French boots, parasols, and gloves, &c., but I could not obtain them; and this not, as I inferred, from the recent disturbed intercourse, but, as I was informed by the persons to whom I applied, from the slight demand for foreign goods.

During the late war Jersey was a great place of refuge for French families, and through the past winter the whole island had been crowded with them, but when we were there, few or none remained, and the only French people we saw were some sailors and market-women, with white caps turned up at the ears, after the fashion of St. Malo, selling fruit and butter. Jersey butter is, by the way, delicious both to sight and taste; it is of a rich creamy yellow, and is made in pounds of, I believe, eighteen or twenty ounces; certainly, it looks a much bigger pound than we are used to, and for it we were charged 1s. 5d. Tea is among the cheap commodities. I saw it constantly marked at 1s. and 1s. 6d. the lb., and was told that was a usual price for ordinary drinking tea. Spirits of every kind are in price much below what we pay in England; we bought very fair brandy for 1s. 6d. the bottle. Lemonade and ginger-beer are sent to you at 1s. the dozen. Grapes grow in great abundance, and there were several famous vineries which we regretted being unable to visit. Early in August the grapes were scarce, and very dear, yet we bought some magnificent black indoor fruit at 2s. the pound.

The climate is somewhat warmer than ours; but the proximity of the sea prevents one feeling the heat to be excessive. In the middle of the day nothing is more pleasant than a rock-shadowed seat on the sands, where you can idly watch the old women and girls toiling away, utterly regardless of the sun's rays, busily collecting seaweed, which they dry and burn as fuel, and carefully collecting the ashes, to keep or sell for manure.

Fish seemed very scarce during our stay, and our landlady told us it was never over-plentiful. During two or three nights, when the moon was at its height, we were awakened by a great shouting and singing from parties returning from a lance-catching expedition; and in several shops in St. Helier's I noticed quantities of these little fish tied up in bundles like dried sprats; but I should fancy the coast too rocky and dangerous for fishing on any extensive scale.

One of our drives was to Mont Orgueil Castle; the road we took skirted the sea, and all along are built round martello towers. As we approached that part of the coast which lay opposite France, the distance between these towers so diminished that they appeared almost within hailing distance of each other. They are no longer apt for purposes of defence, but are rented out as storehouses for different materials.

The coast of France looks so near to Gorey, that we could hardly credit our driver's assertion, that thirteen miles lay between us and the white shores opposite.

At Gorey we alighted and walked up the hill to the castle, which is certainly one of the most interesting relics of the past that the island possesses. In the days of the Black Prince the famous Constable Du Guesclin tried vainly to wrest it from the English. Charles II. for some time resided here, and here Prynne was imprisoned. It is most picturesquely situated, and is still far too substantial-looking to be thought or called a ruin, although grass grows thick in windows and doorways; goats were browsing on its battlements, and boys played hide-and-seek among its once dread dungeons. We lingered a long time about the fine old ivy-covered place, inspecting the little chapel, the prison, and a deep and curious well. Then we returned to have another look at the magnificent sea-view with which the castle is surrounded,—northward lie Anne Port, St. Catharine's Bay, and Archirondel Tower; to the south, Gorey, with its substantial-looking houses and pier; Grouville Bay, and its long tract of common land, on which during the month of July the races, are held. The air about Gorey seems more bracing than in any other part of the island, and we were told that it is much colder there than elsewhere. Our homeward road lay across the common past St. Clement's Church, prettily enshrouded in trees, down again to the coast-side, finally passing Marine Terrace, where our driver told us Victor Hugo had formerly resided.

We spent one Sunday in Jersey, and were much struck with the number of churches and chapels in St. Helier's. Every denomination seemed to be represented, and we were told that besides nine established churches most other religious persuasions had two and three places of worship.

Being near, we had a look at Victoria College, built to commemorate the Queen's visit to Jersey. It is a handsome building, prominently situated, and in it boys get a good and inexpensive education.

We returned to our lodgings by a road which skirts the foot of Fort Regent, a fortress built on an eminence rising abruptly from the water's edge. Cut round it is a pathway, from which at one point we got a magnificent view. On one side lay the town of St. Helier's, with its background of wooded heights; St. Aubin's Bay, in which stands the old fortress Elizabeth Castle, so named after the Queen in whose reign it was built; and, on the other side, the network of rocks which stretch away into St. Clement's Bay. It is a view to store up in one's memory, and would alone almost repay the trouble and difficulty of the watery transit.

When the time came to turn our faces homeward, we left Jersey with much regret, wishing we could have stayed long enough to explore the numerous beauties, which the cursory glance we had been able to take assured us would repay us at every turn. To any one who loves the sea sufficiently to take pleasure in wandering by its shores, listening to its drowsy roll or restless dash, clambering its jagged rocks, and poking among and peering into its weedy thickets, a sojourn at Jersey will prove a season of rest. All this, together with pleasant walks, drives, and healthful excursions, deliciously mild air, and cool sea breezes, comfortable apartments, and excellent provisions, may be enjoyed at a very moderate cost. After we left the hotel, we remained a week, during which time the apartments, food, excursions, and carriage-hire for three persons came to £5. We left Jersey between seven and eight o'clock in the morning, and it was close upon seven o'clock in the evening before we found ourselves at the Southampton station platform, waiting for the train which was to carry us back to London. There is no denying that the voyage is a tedious one; but all that can be done on board the steamer to alleviate discomfort is done, by providing nicely-arranged seats on deck, a comfortable airy cabin below, and a most attentive stewardess. In addition to all this, having fortified myself with a dose of Hunter's Chloral, I safely bade defiance to my old enemy sea-sickness.

L. P.

SOME ENGLISHMEN TO SIR CHARLES DILKE.

A SONNET.

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OH modern Pallas, male and terrible !

Athéné's nursling, who, brought up within

Her robe, art sure that never lion's skin

Clad less than lion ! We, who doubt, are dull

And vile, and wit and virtue must down-pull

The blunder'd Britain of our folly and sin.

But learn this lesson, boy, ere thou begin :

That throne alone is empty which is full.

Th' uncover'd heads of nations do but dare

The stroke of earth and Heaven. To cure a crown

Long since our dauntless England put it on.

And, come the world in arms, she still shall wear

The golden helmet which her wisdom won,

On brows that fools and knaves and maniacs would lay bare.

SYDNEY DOBELL.

## THE APPROACHING ECLIPSE.

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THE eclipse of this month occupies a somewhat exceptional position. It is the last of a series of important total eclipses of the sun following each other at comparatively short intervals, and each (thus far) distinguished by some noteworthy accession to our knowledge. Between the eclipse of June, 1860, and that of August, 1868, very little was added to our information respecting those solar phenomena which are visible during total eclipses. Of course the sun was totally eclipsed more than once during that interval, but either the circumstances of such eclipses were unfavourable, or else the regions where they could be viewed were so situated as to preclude the possibility of forming well-organised observing parties. The great Indian eclipse of August, 1868, terminated this long period of inaction. Then came the important American eclipse of August, 1869; and next, the so-called Mediterranean eclipse of December, 1870. During all these eclipses very striking discoveries were made. It remains to be seen whether the eclipse of the present month will supply the means of so supplementing those discoveries as to satisfy the craving minds of astronomers during the next twenty-eight months. It is in any case certain that during the interval just named no eclipses will occur which will be worth the trouble of observing in the systematic and expensive manner justified by the circumstances of the recent eclipses.

My present purpose is chiefly to indicate the nature of the hopes entertained by astronomers respecting the approaching eclipse, as well as the position to which the observation of the eclipsed sun has already led the students of solar physics. But the opportunity is a favourable one for a brief consideration of the laws according to which solar eclipses succeed each other.

We are apt to regard the prediction of eclipses, and eclipses generally, as among the most mysterious of all the subjects with which astronomers have to deal, and in one view of the matter this is not very far from the truth. Certainly the processes by which the exact circumstances of eclipses are determined years before they occur, are among the most surprising developments of the powers of the human mind which the whole body of science makes us acquainted with. But the general laws of eclipses are not particularly abstruse—certainly not so abstruse as to account for the perplexity with which the subject is very commonly regarded.

I am inclined sometimes to think that our books on astronomy are

not always strictly fair to their readers. Something must always be taken for granted in popular treatises, while other matters are selected for special consideration. But it seems to me, with all deference to the authors of our original treatises on astronomy, that they sometimes discuss far too thoroughly certain matters which the general reader cares very little about, while, on the other hand, they occasionally take for granted and leave unexplained just those matters which the student is best able, as well as most anxious, to comprehend.

Eclipses certainly seem to me to be a case in point. There is something amusing—so at least I conceive—in the elaborate care with which the student of the noblest of all sciences is informed that an opaque body can cast a shadow, and that this shadow will have such and such characteristics. I am not here speaking of elementary treatises. It is reasonable enough, perhaps, in a first book for children to explain that “when the moon stops the sun’s light its shadow falls on a part of the earth,” and that “the people who live on that particular part of the earth where the shadow falls cannot see the sun because the moon is in the way.” This is very pleasing and instructive for very small people; but when in treatises of a higher class the student is gravely informed of these things, as though they involved entirely new and striking conceptions, the idea is suggested that astronomers think but lightly of the capacity of those who chance not to have made astronomy their chief subject of inquiry.

On the other hand, the points about which most readers would care to hear something are commonly left untouched. Scarcely any reader of the usual explanation of eclipses fails to feel interested in the question of the laws according to which the moon comes between the sun and the earth, or the earth between the sun and the moon. The student feels that it may be very well to show him the consequences which follow when these bodies assume particular positions; but that he would also like to know a little about the causes of their becoming so placed, as well as of the laws according to which the sequence of such events is determined.

We are thus led to a mode of considering the subject which is very generally useful in the study of astronomy. I cannot, indeed, too earnestly recommend the student of the science to employ this method at every opportunity. It consists in imagining oneself placed at some suitable standpoint whence all the movements of such and such celestial bodies may be watched.

In this case, the proper standpoint is the sun himself, and the bodies to be watched in imagination are the earth and moon. The student must picture to himself this earth on which we live, as a small globe circling around his standpoint once in a year. He must conceive this globe as no larger in appearance than any one of the planets as seen from the earth. He would, indeed, require a good

telescope to see the earth (from his place on the sun) actually as a globe. Now let him further conceive that around this small globe a much smaller orb is circling once in rather more than four weeks; but that the direction in which he looks at the circular path of the smaller orb is always such that this orb seems to travel backwards and forwards across or close past the larger one. To show exactly how long this path would look as seen from the sun, as well as to illustrate other points of interest connected with this explanation, the following process may be employed. Let the reader draw a circle ten and three-quarter inches in diameter to represent the sun or moon as we see these orbs. At the centre of this circle draw a small one, one-tenth of an inch in diameter; this will represent the earth as seen from the sun. Three inches from this small circle set another, a fortieth of an inch in diameter; this will represent the moon as seen from the sun when at her greatest range of distance from the earth. Exactly on the opposite side of the little circle representing the earth, and three inches from that circle, set another little picture of the moon; this represents the moon as seen from the sun when at her greatest range of distance from the earth on the other side. The observer in the sun would see the moon pass backwards and forwards from one position to the other in rather more than four weeks. In thus moving backwards and forwards the moon passes always close (in appearance) to the earth, but sometimes closer than at others, and sometimes right across or right behind the earth's face. The path, in fact, opens out into an oval whose greatest width, on our scale, is slightly more than five-tenths of an inch, then closes up, then opens out to the same degree, only tilted the other way, then closes up again, and so on continually, while the earth all the time is circling round the observer's standpoint once in a year, and the moon round her path (thus varying in aspect)\* once in twenty-nine and a half days. Speaking roughly, we may say that once a fortnight the imagined observer in the sun would see the moon crossing the earth's place. He would *always* see the moon close to the earth, since we have seen that the whole length of the moon's path, as seen from the sun, is much less than the breadth of the sun's globe as we see it; but twice in a month the moon would be *very* close by the earth.

Now our observer in the sun would see that the moon's path passed from its greatest opening to a seeming line, and thence to its

\* Of course the path is not a real entity, and could not therefore be seen, as supposed. It is convenient, however, to regard it as such. We may thus compare it to the outer rim of Saturn's ring-system; and precisely as we see that ring-system closing up and opening out systematically in the course of about twenty-nine years, so certainly an observer on the sun, watching our moon's course, would find her path opening out and closing up systematically in the course of eleven months eleven days, the seeming length of the path remaining appreciably unchanged, and about equal to three-fifths of the seeming diameter of the sun as seen from the earth.

greatest opening again (but with opposite tilt) in five months and about three weeks; passing back to a seeming line and to its original opening again, in all respects as at first, in the same time. Eleven months and eleven days complete the whole set of changes. When the path seemed most open the moon would not at any time actually cross the earth's face, or pass actually behind it. In other words, the moon would neither hide any part of the earth from the sun nor be hidden by the earth. Hiding any parts of the earth from the sun means obviously eclipsing the sun as viewed from those parts of the earth; while to say the moon is hidden from the sun by the earth means (no less obviously) that the moon is thrown into shadow, or eclipsed. So that when the moon's path, as seen from the sun, is most open—forming then a long oval—there can be no eclipses either of the sun or moon. But when this path has in appearance closed up to a line, or nearly to a line, the moon can no longer pass by the earth (as viewed from the sun) without actually crossing the earth's disc or passing actually behind that disc. So long as this state of things lasts there must be an eclipse whenever the moon's backward and forward motion carries her past the earth. We have seen that the moon's path has this aspect, or is closed up into a straight line, as seen from the sun, at intervals of about five months and three weeks. For rather more than a month the path is sufficiently closed for eclipses to occur. I have suggested for these occasions the title of "eclipse months." To show how they succeed each other, take the following illustrative instance:—Let January in any year be an eclipse month, the middle of January being the time when the moon's path appears closed up into a line as seen from the sun. Then five months and three weeks later, or about the 6th of July, the path is again closed up into a line as seen from the sun; and a period of rather more than a month, having this date for its middle—or from about June 22 to about July 23—is again an "eclipse month." Passing on from July 6, we reach in five months and three weeks, the date December 27, which is the middle of the next "eclipse month." And so on continually.

Other matters connected with the recurrence and peculiarities of these "eclipse months" belong, or should belong, to treatises on astronomy. What has been said above suffices for my present purpose,—which is to explain the sequence of the late eclipses. It will be observed that about eleven months and eleven days separate an eclipse month in one year from the corresponding eclipse month in the next. We thus see why the great Indian eclipse of August, 1868, had its analogues, so to speak, in the total eclipse of August 29, in the preceding year, and in the American eclipse of August 7, 1869. These three eclipses, occurring eleven days earlier in each succeeding year, were all three total. But the series did not end with the eclipse of August, 1869. On July 27, 1870 (again eleven days earlier) there



was an eclipse of the sun. It was, however, only a partial one, and closed the series.

Now the eclipse of the present month belongs to another series. It will be remembered by every one that there was an eclipse on December 22, last year; that eclipse was the first of the series to which the approaching eclipse belongs. This series, like the former, includes four eclipses. Last December the moon as seen from the sun crossed the earth's face near its northern edge. In the eclipse of Tuesday, December 12, the moon, as supposed to be seen from the sun, will pass slightly to the north of the middle point of the earth's face.\* Thus the eclipse will be more important than that of last year, and the length of the actual track of the moon's shadow considerably greater. The third eclipse of the series will occur on November 30, 1872. In one respect it will be one of the most remarkable ever recorded; for it must be described as at once an annular and a total eclipse of the sun. This is readily explained, though the occurrence is altogether exceptional. The reader is aware that the point of the moon's conical shadow sometime extends beyond and sometimes falls short of the earth. In the former case an eclipse is total, in the latter it is annular. But in the eclipse of November 30, 1872, the apex of the shadow falls short of the earth's surface at the beginning of the eclipse; it encounters the earth as the shadow-track passed onward towards the bulging central part of the earth's illuminated hemisphere; and presently, towards the close of the eclipse, falls again short of the earth's surface. So that there are two points on the earth's surface where, on November 30, 1872, the eclipse will be exactly total, the moon just hiding the sun and no more, and only for a single instant. The totality will nowhere last more than about three-quarters of a minute; and as the place where this will happen lies very far south in the Pacific Ocean, it is not likely that any observer will witness this eclipse. It is, however, the most considerable solar eclipse of the year 1872. The last eclipse of the series occurs on November 19, 1873, and, like the last of the former series, it is altogether unimportant. The moon, as supposed to be seen from the sun, will just graze the most southerly part of the earth's disc. "The circumstances of the eclipse are such," says the Nautical Almanac, "that a map has not been considered requisite." There will be no total solar eclipse at all in 1873.

\* It is a singular circumstance that the earth will present almost exactly the same face towards the sun at the moment of central eclipse on the 12th inst., as at the middle of the transit of Venus, on December 8, 1874. The fifteen pictures of the rotating earth, in Plate VIII. of my treatise on the sun, illustrate the approaching eclipse as exactly as though drawn for the purpose. The first shows the earth's face as seen from the sun just before the moon's passage begins; the next thirteen show the earth's face at successive intervals of a quarter of an hour during the progress of the eclipse; and the last shows the earth's face as seen from the sun just after the moon has passed off that face.

Not until April 16, 1874, will any total eclipse worth observing take place, after the eclipse of the present month. Nor are the circumstances of the eclipse of 1874 such as to encourage favourable hopes that much will be learned during its progress. On April 6, 1875, there will be, I believe, a much more important eclipse visible (as I judge from a rough calculation) in America; but I shall probably be excused from entering into an exact calculation of its circumstances, more especially as the *Nautical Almanac* for 1875 will, I believe, be published before this essay appears.

It will be inferred that a considerable degree of interest is attached by astronomers to the eclipse of the present month, followed as it will be by two years and four months during which there will be no solar eclipses worthy of special observation.

Although the eclipse of the 12th inst. is not nearly so favourable for observational purposes as the great Indian eclipse of 1868, yet there is a considerable variety as respects the choice of stations. In fact there are no less than four distinct sections of the moon's shadow-track to which it has been judged advisable to send observers. The track crosses the southern extremity of the Indian peninsula, and along this part of its course there will probably be several observing parties, the arrangements being superintended by Mr. Pogson, the Government Astronomer at Madras, and by Colonel Tennant and Captain Herschel, both known to fame through their observations during the great eclipse of 1868. Thence the shadow-track passes to the northern part of Ceylon, and along this part of its course the English eclipse expedition will be stationed. It will probably be in the remembrance of most of my readers that the English Government granted (several months back) the sum of £2,000, as well as transport and the means of camping, for an expedition to Ceylon. It was hoped that Professor Stokes would have been able to take charge of this expedition; but these hopes were disappointed. Mr. Lockyer, however, has been able to give his services, and doubtless the expedition will be a highly effective one. The shadow-track passes from Ceylon to Java, where a French party under M. Janssen will be stationed. Lastly, the shadow-track passes to the northern part of the Australian continent, and a strong observing party has proceeded from Sydney and Melbourne to the stations along this part of the shadow's course.

The totality will last longest in North Australia, where its duration will be more than four minutes, or nearly two minutes longer than the duration of the eclipse of last year at the best stations. In Java the totality will last more than three minutes. In Ceylon the duration of totality will barely exceed by a few seconds the duration of totality last December. A somewhat curious mistake was made on this point in a scientific journal. Mr. Hind, in his first and comparatively rough estimate of the course traversed by the moon's shadow, had placed Trincomalee on the border of the track, so that the duration

of totality at Trincomalee would have been very short. But after his final and more elaborate calculation, he set Trincomalee close to the centre of the shadow-track, with a duration of total obscuration amounting to two and a half minutes. Strangely enough the increase of the estimated duration was alone noticed by the writer of an article in *Nature*, and it was reasoned that since the duration is so considerable at Trincomalee on the border of the track, it must be very much greater at places on the centre of the track. I need scarcely point out that this inference was unwarranted. In fact the duration of totality can never under any circumstances be considerable for places close to the border of the shadow-track.\* In southern India the eclipse will last about as long as the eclipse of last year at the best stations.

It cannot be doubted that the observers this year will have a much more difficult task than those who have added so importantly to our knowledge during the eclipses of the last three years. This will appear on a brief consideration of the progress and present position of the problem with which the observers are to deal.

In 1868, the observers of the great Indian eclipse discovered that the solar prominences are vast masses of glowing vapour, hydrogen being the chief constituent of these marvellous objects. But the solar corona, that glory of light which appears around and beyond the coloured prominences, did not at that time receive its interpretation. In 1869, the American observers directed their chief attention to this beautiful phenomenon; and they were singularly successful in their observations. One result of a very remarkable character was obtained by several observers. The light of the corona when analysed in the spectroscope was found to be in large part monochromatic, the coronal spectrum showing one bright line. Now the reader is doubtless aware that in spectrum analysis the essential point is to determine *where* any bright or dark lines may lie along the range of that rainbow-tinted streak which we call the solar spectrum. In this instance the position of the bright line has been most satisfactorily determined by a very skilful spectroscopist, Professor Young, of America. The line agrees in position with one of the lines in the spectrum of iron, a line also seen in the spectrum of the aurora borealis. But the spectrum of iron contains upwards of 400 lines, while even the simpler spectrum of the aurora contains several lines; that of the corona, on the other hand, has not been *proved* to contain any other bright lines except the one just mentioned. Others have been suspected, but the degree of their brightness has not been such as to prove beyond all possibility of question that they belong to the solar corona.

However, as Professor Young remarks on this point (*writing*

\* A somewhat similar mistake occurred last year, whereby the Sicilian eclipse party formed too sanguine expectations of the duration of totality in that island.

in 1871, "considered as a demonstration of self-luminosity one bright line is just as conclusive as many."

It was in fact demonstrated by this observation alone that the corona, for a considerable part at least of its extension, is a self-luminous object. "Nor can there be any doubt," we may add with Professor Young, "as to the location of the self-luminous matter. It cannot be in our atmosphere, for no possible reason can be assigned why the particular molecules of the air that happen to lie near the lines which join the eye of the observer with the edge of the moon should become luminous rather than others in a different portion of the sky. Nor can it be at the moon; otherwise, of course, it would always be visible round her disc." "Accordingly," he adds, "it is now universally, I think I may say, acknowledged that *one important element of the corona consists of a solar envelope of glowing gas reaching to a considerable elevation.* Mr. Lockyer, who is still disposed to assign to the solar element of the corona a lower relative importance than most other astronomers, concedes a thickness of from six to ten minutes"—that is from a fifth to a third of the solar diameter.

This, as I have said, was written by Professor Young in 1871, but before a certain most important fact had come to his knowledge, which without at all affecting what he here puts forward, renders it possible to say much more as to the real extension of the corona.

We have seen that a certain object, surrounding the sun on all sides to a distance of from 160,000 miles to 290,000 miles from his surface, is demonstrably a self-luminous envelope. It was to this envelope, or perhaps rather to its brighter portion as seen from the earth, that some proposed to assign the barbarous name "leucosphere," to distinguish it from the bright layer of prominence-matter close by the sun, which is called the sierra, or chromatosphere. But the visible extension of the corona is greater yet, and before the eclipse of 1870 doubts still existed as to the actual extent of that solar corona, which all had now begun to recognise as a real entity. That some portion of the light seen around the sun during total eclipse is in reality only due to the illumination of our own atmosphere is altogether beyond question. It is true, indeed, as was pointed out by Professors Young and Harkness, Dr. Curtis, and myself, that none of the coronal light for several degrees from the sun's place, can be solar light reflected by our atmosphere, as had been mistakenly supposed; but it is no less certain that our atmosphere is illuminated not merely in directions lying close up to the moon's edge, but even towards the body of the moon herself, by the light of the coloured prominences and of the real solar corona. The observer himself sees these luminous objects during totality, and therefore the air all round him must be illuminated by them.\*

\* One cannot but be surprised at the stress which was laid by some soon after

Now here a question of extreme delicacy arises. The true solar corona undoubtedly grows fainter and fainter with increased extension from the sun. That is, if we could see the corona from some point raised above the earth's atmosphere, so that no terrestrial illumination could deceive us, we should see the corona gradually diminishing in lustre with distance from the sun, until at last it became too faint to be discerned at all. On the contrary, the illumination of our atmosphere during totality must necessarily increase with distance from the direction of the eclipsed sun. This is obvious, because those molecules of the air which lie directly towards the moon's place are themselves suffering total eclipse from the sun's direct light, and are illuminated by a rather less proportion of prominence and coronal light than the observer himself, whereas those molecules which lie in directions far removed from the place of the eclipsed sun are suffering either but a partial eclipse, or else, though their eclipse be total, they are yet illuminated by more lustrous portions of the corona and prominence-matter. So that so far as atmospheric glare alone is concerned, we should have, as I wrote in March, 1870, a relatively "dark region around the eclipsed sun and a gradual increase of light with distance from him."

The question which arises here, then, is this—at what distance from the eclipsed sun has the light of the solar corona so diminished, and that of the atmospheric glare so increased, that the latter light predominates over the former. This question is not only exceedingly nice, but, as actually stated, it is wholly unanswerable, unless as a matter of fact the real solar corona has definite limits, recognisable perhaps by more refined methods of observation than have yet been applied.

But although it is unlikely that the utmost actual extension of the corona can be determined by means of such appliances as are at present available, yet it was possible last December to demonstrate the extension of the corona to a distance far exceeding the six or ten minutes acknowledged by those who had once sought to reason away the corona almost wholly. It is clear that if any definite coronal feature extending more than ten minutes from the place of the eclipsed

the eclipse of last December, on the fact that even directly towards the moon's place, light was received which the spectroscope showed to be similar in character to that of the bright inner portion of the corona. Not only was the fact dwelt on repeatedly as a proof that the corona lies on *our* side of the moon, but it was commended to my own special attention as a proof that I had been mistaken in urging before the eclipse of 1870 that the corona is demonstrably a solar appendage. In the very paper in which I urged this view before the Royal Astronomical Society, on March 11, 1870, I pointed out that our air must be illuminated towards the moon's place by the light of all the visible solar appendages—as the prominences, chromatosphere, and corona—as well as by reflected earth-light. My words were sufficiently distinct. They ran as follows:—"The light from all these sources should extend over the moon's disc, since it would illuminate the air between the observer and the moon's body."

sun, could be seen at stations far apart, then beyond all question that feature would be shewn to be extra terrestrial. For instance, it could not possibly be imagined that some peculiarity in the air over Syracuse could reproduce a feature of this sort precisely as it appeared to the observers near Xerez, owing to a peculiarity of the air over this station.

Now, soon after the eclipse occurred, it was announced that the observers in Spain had recognised a peculiar gap, shaped like a letter V, in the lower portion of the corona—on the left hand. This gap was pictured and described to me by my friend, Mr. W. H. H. Hudson, M.A., and Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, before any of the other accounts had come under my notice; and it was with some interest that I awaited the January meeting of the Royal Astronomical Society, before which the records of the observers in Spain were to be presented. At that meeting a picture was exhibited by Lieutenant Brown, in which this V-shaped gap was a very prominent feature. But in the discussion which ensued after Lieutenant Brown's paper had been read, Mr. Hudson remarked that the gap had seemed somewhat larger to him,—on which Lieutenant Brown admitted that perhaps the size of the gap had not been quite adequately presented in his drawing.

After the meeting a photograph, taken during the eclipse by Mr. Willard, of America, was shown to a few of those present. Why the picture was not exhibited and described at the meeting itself I do not know. Probably the description was reserved for American societies. But whatever the cause, it is certain that if the picture had been shown earlier, some doubts which were expressed respecting the real nature of the corona would have been obviated. For there, in the photograph, and occupying the precise position described to me much earlier by Mr. Hudson, and publicly described and pictured by Lieutenant Brown and others, was this V-shaped gap.

Mr. Willard's photograph was taken at a station near Xerez, so that all that has hitherto been said relates to Spanish observations. To complete this portion of the evidence, I quote the following passage from an interesting account of the eclipse by one of the observers in Spain. It is extracted from the *English Mechanic* for January 27, 1871. "The corona proper, or glory, or radiated corona—as it is variously called—extended a distance of almost the moon's diameter from the moon's edge, but not equally in every direction. It had a greater extension in four directions, at the extremities of two diameters at right angles to each other, so as to give it the shape, roughly speaking, of a square with rounded corners. It was broken in parts, and notably by one decided V-shaped gap. This was observed, not only by one party, but at three stations, San Antonio, Xerez, and La Maria Louisa, which form a triangle, each of whose sides is five or six miles in length."

But in the meantime news had been received from Sicily which conveyed the unpleasing impression that the observations there had been all but complete failures. In particular it was supposed that Mr. Brothers, who had the management of the photographic department there, had been unable to obtain any useful results,—since no mention had yet been made of his success. I was indeed as much surprised as pleased, when I received a letter from him announcing that he had secured five photographs of the corona, in one of which the corona appeared “as it had never been seen on glass before.” It will be conceived that I awaited with great interest even the first rough sketch of the corona as there pictured. If the V-shaped gap appeared in such sketch, the conclusion would be inevitable that a real solar appendage exists having an extension at least equal to that indicated by the bounding edges of the gap—that is, an extension of at least 600,000 miles. If, on the other hand, that well-marked peculiarity failed to present itself, the inference would be that it does not exist in the photograph, and that, therefore, the seeming gap was due to some peculiarity of the atmospheric illumination at the Spanish stations. It would not, in this case, be by any means demonstrated that the sun has no appendage reaching so far as five or six hundred thousand miles from the sun’s surface, but it would be quite certain that the evidence given by the V-shaped gap could not be accepted as demonstrative or even trustworthy. The presence of the V-shaped gap in Mr. Brothers’s photograph would supply an argument positive and final; its absence would supply a negative argument, proving nothing however, and leaving the matter much where it stood before the eclipse took place.

• The first sketch I received was contained in a hasty note from Mr. Brothers, written soon after his arrival in England. I was surprised, and, to say the truth, somewhat disappointed, to find that the V-shaped gap was *not* shown, as in the Spanish pictures. There were several gaps, but not one in the lower left-hand portion of the corona. But in the next letter which I received, Mr. Brothers intimated that the sketch was only intended to show the general aspect of the corona—to show its radiated structure,—and that, in fact, he had not copied the sketch from the photograph, the negative not being as yet unpacked. Some days elapsed before a drawing made from the photograph was sent to me. In this drawing the V-shaped gap was not only presented in the same place as in the Spanish views, but, as in them, it formed the most remarkable feature of the corona. Soon after, photographs taken directly from Mr. Brothers’s negative were in the hands of all who took interest in the subject, and there—pictured by the corona itself—was the gap on which so much was held to depend. All possibility of mistake as to the reality of the agreement between this gap and the gap shown in the American photograph was removed by the circumstance that two other gaps, less marked but still recognisable, appeared in both photographs.

I have dwelt somewhat at length on this V-shaped gap, because it is in reality of extreme importance. On no former occasion had any distinctive feature of the corona been unmistakably recognised at stations far apart. It happened strangely that on the first occasion upon which the corona was successfully photographed, a very remarkable and characteristic peculiarity was presented by the corona. Favourable as are the circumstances of the approaching eclipse, it is not by any means certain that the photographs taken at distant stations will be so well suited for comparison as those taken during the eclipse of last year. So that it is well to set store by the great fact which was established by the observers of the latter eclipse. The following words, taken from a letter addressed to Mr. Brothers by Sir John Herschel, serve to indicate the importance which he attached to the photographic records of the V-shaped gap:—"Assuredly," he wrote, "the decidedly marked notch or bay in both photographs" (those taken at Cadiz and Syracuse) "agreeing so perfectly in situation (marked so definitely by its occurrence just opposite the middle point between two unmistakable red prominences) is evidence not to be refused, of its extra-atmospheric origin.\* . . . A terrestrial atmospheric origin is quite out of the question."

And here, in passing, I may venture to note as somewhat surprising—in the presence of such an opinion, announced publicly before the highest astronomical tribunal of this kingdom—the statement made by the President of the last meeting of the British Association, that the observations during the eclipse of 1870 proved the terrestrial atmospheric origin of at least the principal portion of the coronal light. Even if we rejected the positive evidence obtained during that eclipse, and even if we regarded Herschel's opinion as of no weight whatever, it would still be impossible to point to a single fact discovered last December which tended to confirm the atmospheric theory. Facts were noticed then, as facts have been noticed before, which at a first view seem to suggest a terrestrial origin of the coronal phenomena; but undoubtedly none of those facts were novel. Every circumstance that was new to astronomers was in favour of

\* The omitted words relate to the absence of any signs which could show the corona to be a phenomenon produced within the space separating the earth from the moon. On this point, further, I may remark that I had occasion to submit to Sir John Herschel certain considerations relating to a theory that the radiations of the corona are produced by the passage of the solar rays past the moon's edge, through dispersed meteoric matter between the earth and the moon. I submitted, amongst other matters, this question to the great astronomer—Whether the light due to the illumination of this dispersed matter would not be altogether inferior in amount to the light received from the illumination of similar matter lying beyond the moon, up to and beyond the sun's place? His reply was, as I had fully expected, that undoubtedly this consideration (which he had not before noticed) rendered the lunar theory of the corona altogether untenable.



the extra-terrestrial origin, which, as we have seen, Sir John Herschel regarded as demonstrated. It is at least unfortunate that in thus summing up the results of the costly eclipse expedition of December, 1870, Sir W. Thomson did not mention what particular discovery then made seemed to his judgment to demonstrate the terrestrial origin (in the main) of the coronal phenomena. One can understand why Professor Tait, after hearing a lecture on the general subject of solar eclipses, should have remarked that what he had just heard convinced him that the corona was of terrestrial origin; for a variety of eclipse phenomena seem at a first view to suggest the atmospheric theory as the only available explanation. Moreover there can be no question that some of the most striking phenomena presented at the beginning and towards the close of totality, are actually due to the illumination of our atmosphere at those epochs by departing rays or returning rays of direct sunlight. After a lecture chiefly devoted to the consideration of precisely such phenomena as these, and illustrated by striking pictures of such phenomena, the opinion might well be formed that the chief part of the coronal radiance is simply atmospheric. It is only on a complete survey of the subject, and especially of the evidence relating to the corona as seen in the heart of the totality, that the immense weight of evidence in favour of the real existence of the corona as a solar appendage of amazing extent is clearly recognised. But so far as could be judged by the report, Sir W. Thomson's expression of opinion related solely to the new results—the discoveries, in fact—effected last December; and it is perplexing in the extreme to hear these results described as demonstrating the atmospheric origin of the chief portion of the corona.

The only new fact which seems in the least to countenance this remarkable statement, is the circumstance that the light received from the direction in which the moon's dark disc lay, was found, when analysed by the spectroscope, to resemble the light received from the corona. At first sight this seems to show that the corona itself is an atmospheric phenomenon. For certainly the light received from the direction of the moon's dark disc cannot come directly from a solar appendage. And as great stress was laid on this circumstance by some, unfamiliar with what was to be expected when this light came to be examined, it seems just possible that Sir W. Thomson may have been guided by their strongly-expressed opinion.

But as a matter of fact no other result could have been expected. I had myself pointed out in March, 1870, that reflected light of precisely the observed nature, must be received from the moon's direction. The air above and around the observer—including necessarily that lying towards the moon's disc—must needs be illuminated by the same coronal glory which the observer gazes upon with such wonder during totality; and the light of that atmosphere, so illuminated, must present the same characteristics as the direct light of

the corona, precisely as the light of the sky when examined with the spectroscope shows the same dark lines as the direct light of the sun.

We have only to remember, however, that the moon looks so dark during totality as to seem perfectly black, to see how very small a part atmospheric illumination can have in producing the coronal phenomena. The light received from the direction of the moon's disc must be at least as strong as any atmospheric illumination within the region occupied by the coronal glory; for this illumination, if we could see it alone, would be nearly uniform, while, where the moon is, we receive (over and above the atmospheric illumination) no inconsiderable amount of what astronomers call earth-light. The moon's surface, at the moment of a total eclipse, is illuminated by the earth some twelve times more brightly than the earth's surface in full moonlight. If we look at a distant hill (not forest-covered) bathed in the light of the full moon, we see that it is appreciably luminous—brighter certainly, in appearance, than the dark looking disc of the moon during an eclipse. Yet the moon's disc, during eclipse, is twelve times as luminous, at least; and if all other light could be removed, we should see the moon at that time as a disc illuminated with no inconsiderable degree of brightness. Since the moon actually looks almost black—though this reflected light is reinforced by the atmospheric illumination—we cannot but admit that the atmospheric illumination alone must be very inconsiderable compared with the light even of the outer parts of the corona, which, though faint, seem by no means black.

Professor Young, of America, has reasoned similarly on this point. "Some influence," he says, "our atmosphere must, of course, have; but remembering how much the inner portion of the coronal ring exceeds in brightness the outer, it would seem that the illumination of the lunar disc must give us an exaggerated measure of the true atmospheric effect. This illumination makes the edge of the moon only enough brighter than the centre to give it the appearance of a globe, but of almost inky blackness." Dr. Balfour Stewart, also, in a letter addressed to Mr. Brothers, points out very clearly how insignificant relatively must be the atmospheric illumination. "The light which reaches us in a total eclipse from the centre of the moon's disc, and which may be partly due to earth-light reflected from the moon, may be safely taken as somewhat exceeding that which can possibly be due to atmospheric glare; and inasmuch as in your photographs there is very little effect on the centre of the moon's disc, I am led to think that very little of the result obtained can be due to glare. I have here confined myself strictly to your photographs, but the principle laid down is applicable to all kinds of observations; and I must confess that I cannot at the present moment see why the streamers, if they are caused by the atmosphere, should invariably shoot outwards, and never venture to trespass upon the moon's disc."

The present position of astronomers is this—They have proved that there is a solar appendage extending to a vast distance from the sun's surface, radiated—usually, if not always—in structure, and shining in great part with its own inherent lustre. The portion of the corona's substance which is thus self-luminous, is gaseous. It may well be, however, that there is also a self-luminous portion in the solid or liquid condition—probably in a state of fine division. And it has been rendered all but certain that a considerable portion of the corona's light is simply sunlight reflected from solid or liquid matter in the corona. For while it is perhaps doubtful whether the solid or liquid matter is self-luminous through intensity of heat, no question remains as to the actual existence of such matter. Lastly, it seems highly probable that a portion of the coronal light has an electrical origin, like the light of our auroras.

Astronomers hope to obtain, during the approaching eclipse, more satisfactory information than they have at present, respecting the actual extension of the corona, as well as of the various portions of which it consists. The observers will have to discriminate between the light due to atmospheric illumination, and those fainter and more delicate portions of the real corona which have as yet not been traced to their actual limits (if they have any). It is hoped, in particular, that photographs taken at the extreme stations—those in India and Northern Australia—will so confirm the evidence first obtained from Mr. Brothers's photographs, as to convince the most sceptical that the corona is not a mere atmospheric phenomenon. It may well be that spectroscopists and polariscopists will obtain some new information respecting the structure of the corona; but to effect this they will have to overcome great difficulties, owing to the way in which the light from our air is blended with the light from the corona. Altogether, I am disposed to believe that at this stage of our progress chief reliance is to be placed on the powers of photography. After Mr. Brothers's success during the last eleven seconds only of totality (for a cloud veiled the eclipsed sun for the first two minutes), it may fairly be hoped that by applying his method the photographers may obtain such pictures of the corona as will throw an altogether new light on this wonderful solar appendage.

RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

## THE LITERARY LIFE.

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### IV.

THE general reader frequently hears of the enormous number of "literary aspirants" there are in the world, all eager to press forward and snatch at the smallest chance of "a leg up." He has probably heard, in addition, that one of the causes that drove Thackeray from the editorial chair of the *Cornhill* (I do not vouch for the truth of this, though there is something in the story) was that he found his time too much taken up, and his equanimity too much shaken by eager "aspirants," who had all sorts of reasons but the right ones—namely, merit and adaptation—to urge upon him for the printing of the articles and stories that they sent; want of money being one of the principal of these utterly extraneous reasons. Now, it is certain that among articles of equal or nearly equal merit, the preference should be given to that of the writer who most needs help; but that want of money is *in itself* a circumstance utterly irrelevant to the other conditions of the case is, one would think, too obvious to need insisting upon. We must presume, I suppose, that the persons, chiefly ladies, who send articles and stories with an "appeal" because they want money, have full faith in the supreme merit of their writings; so that, with them, the irrelevancy is merely matter of hypothesis. Of course, a writer of merit may send in MS. with an appeal of the kind in question—Crabbe sent in his to Burke with such an addendum—but still, the circumstance is irrelevant; and I never knew a good article or story by an utterly unknown writer to be accompanied by anything of the kind. I have, however, admitted that there may be such a case. But I am sure that if there were, the appeal would be downright, simple, *bare*, and *probably almost defiant*; not a flabby, lachrymose whine—about "heavy losses" or "an aged parent"—written on scented paper, and enclosed in an envelope with a coat-of-arms to it.

I may observe, by the way, that there can be no better test of a person's capacity to write well than his power of wording properly an appeal of the kind in question. I have known two or three editors who would read with a flushed face a letter like Crabbe's to Burke.

But when I began I was about to say that those little papers have brought me more inquiries, from acquaintances, half-acquaintances, and strangers, than I can possibly answer at length in the usual way—inquiries concerning the best course for an "aspirant" to take. Too many of these inquiries show that the writers lack that first

essential for "success" of any kind—the disposition to *take* trouble. With this is naturally associated a marked readiness to *give* it, and a thoughtless inclination to put others in an invidious position. It is all very well for A to write to C, "Pray tell me if I write well, and I promise to abide by your decision." But C has probably read "Gil Blas," and remembers the archbishop; he has some reason to fear that a kindly candid judgment which had cost him much labour would be resented as an affront, and make him at least one enemy; and, in any case, why should A harass C by pushing him up into the judgment-seat in that way? C may reasonably, wisely, and kindly too, make answer, "My judgment might be mistaken—it is not fair of you to saddle me with this responsibility."

That is what I have often felt, and so my general answer to "aspirants" would be somewhat as follows,—and here I have no hesitation in assuming responsibility, for the advice is sound and wholesome:—You must make your own experiments, and pioneer your own path. Thackeray wrote, for years, at half-a-guinea a page, and had to wait wearily, as others have done, for the "public," and the position which made him able to command good terms for his work. That point gained, he is a busy and anxious man, no longer young—"homme célèbre vieillit," you know—and though the recollection of his own troubles may make him kinder to you than some people were to him, you may depend he has his hands full. Hunt your own game then. Aim low to begin with. Try very very humble periodicals at first, and make your experiments as varied as you possibly can. Preserve whatever gets printed, and compare it with the workmanship of others. It is a great advantage to have your stuff before you in print. Pay careful attention to the special character and requirements of the periodical to which you send your matter. Do not let the ardour of any convictions of your own induce you to send to any untried quarter articles of opinion which would commit the periodical. *Attend particularly to the last two directions.* By degrees, aim higher; and, still, carefully compare your own printed odds and ends with the work of others. And it is then probable that you will some day make the "lucky hit," or meet the appreciative editor or publisher; in brief, that you will succeed in some sort of proportion to your merit.

But it must not be concealed that all manner of uncertainty must still overhang the most carefully and laboriously pioneered path in these matters. Not wishing to say all I know of odd accidents in the career of other people, I will, with the permission of the reader, give, in words both frank and plain, some account of the fortunes of a certain little labour of my own. I first wrote a small portion of it, which we will call X, and sent it to the intelligent editor of a periodical for which I already wrote. He rejected it quite sternly, because he said it "ridiculed" certain things. I was much surprised

at this, having written with conscious earnestness, and having intended no "ridicule" whatever. I then sent him another portion of the matter, which we will call Q. This he rejected rather cavalierly, because he found it "commonplace." Now, I knew it to be, whatever else it was, original and vivid, and my disgust at this reception was such that I laid the whole thing by for a time. Later on, being one month very ill and hard up for copy for another magazine, which was so badly edited that you could do pretty well what you liked with it, I called to mind those fragments, and sent one of them to press. It was printed, and instantly taken up by the newspapers, and quoted about and about. Later still, I sent the remainder to another periodical. Here, also, it was rejected, and I have yet its original by me, bearing in the margin such editorial comments as these—"Shocking!" "Horrible!" "???", "Truly awful!" Now comes the fun. First: the editor who rejected X and Q for the reasons above quoted, knew all about the topics treated, and I relied upon his knowledge to enable him to understand my papers. He failed. Secondly: the editor who found them "shocking" knew *nothing* about the topics, and I relied upon his ignorance, thinking he would surely pass what he knew nothing about. Thirdly: every line of these papers, including X and Q (the matter is objective, narrative, and perfectly simple), has been printed; has been welcomed by religious readers of all classes; and what has happened to it in the highest reviewing quarters, must not be told by my pen. Such is life, sometimes, in literature. These things are susceptible of explanation, if it were worth while to spend the necessary amount of time over them; but it is not. I could give other instances of the same kind; but it would only come to this, that most people are inapprehensive on some "side," and that even in some intelligent editors there is a deep vein of downright thickheadedness.

The relations of publishers and authors constitute too tender a topic to meddle with hastily. I reserve it.

There is one thing to which I feel as if I ought to refer, though it must be briefly, because it also is a delicate matter, though the delicacy is of a different order. We are many of us indebted in various ways to unknown friends—certainly, men who write are—and it is one of my chronic ambitions to say some words of thanks to such friends in a fitting and not wholly unworthy form—a form substantial, and not entirely unpoetic. But this is what demands to be *now* added. A man who writes feelingly and sincerely will, if his writing meets with any acceptance, be likely to receive private communications—some anonymous and some signed—which will be *very* cordial to him. The apprehensive reader will see why I say no more on that point.

A writer of essays and, I think also, novels, who has genuine humour, writes as follows upon a topic which has already arisen in these papers:—

"In the meantime, if we have not wealth, we have something. We can spend our lives where we will. If any literary gentleman's genius is so erratic as to cause him to prefer the country to London, he may go to Jericho—no, *not* to Jericho, because of the uncertainty of the book and manuscript post, but to Coventry, if he likes, and live *there*. And wherever he lives, he may do pretty much as he pleases. Society, so exacting with all other callings, is lenient to this one. She does not impose obligations upon him—to keep a page, or to rent a pew. He is treated by her with much the same sort of favour as Idiots are among the North American Indians. The Great Spirit has put a bee in his bonnet, and they not only forbear to criticise, but regard him with considerable approbation."

This is very ingeniously put, and there is some truth in it ; but the tendency of the day is utterly to disallow of the bees in people's bonnets, whether they are "literary" or not ; and certain portions of the work of journalism are necessarily done by a staff which is recruited more and more from the "Philistine" class. If there is anything much more offensive than the "virtue" of *bourgeois* journalism, I should like to have it pointed out to me. Give a "jawy" vestryman a good education and an extra allowance of brains of the sort you get in, say, a successful barrister. Then set him to write leading articles on social questions. It is true he will write as if he were in hourly telegraphic communication with the Great Spirit ; but he will have very little mercy on the "bee" in anybody's "bonnet." His opinions and estimates of things are substantially those of the stout smug-faced man in the corner of the omnibus (who certainly never had a bee in his bonnet)—at least if they are not, they cotton to him in a most hypocritical manner. Such a publicist does not, strictly speaking, belong to the literary class at all. Whatever apparent exceptions may be urged to the contrary—Sir Walter Scott, for example, who was, however, no exception—the bee in the bonnet is more likely to be found in the artist class, of every sort, than in any other. It is impossible in the nature of things that the artistic temperament—literary, or other,—should not induce a dislike of *mechanism* of all kinds. In artists totally destitute of speculative power, and of some of the most important sensibilities the artist can possess (Sir Walter Scott was such an artist), whatever social mechanism comes to hand will easily be identified with their deepest emotions and convictions in matters of right and wrong. In artists of other moulds this will not be so, and the mechanism may chance to get the go-bye. I am not now going to discuss the question whether it is according to the will of "the Great Spirit" that the mechanism never *should* get the go-bye, but be always assumed to be an accurate sign of the thing meant to be signified ; but, in the meantime, character is more than conduct ; is before it, and above it ; and practically determines all moral judgments. Not always the judgments that are uttered, nor usually those, but the verdicts that our hearts and consciences give, though the "Great Spirit" have put even a very trouble-

some "bee" in a man's bonnet. And I desire emphatically to repeat what I have already said on this point. I have been a familiar spectator and sharer of the lives of the class specifically called "religious." My very first glimpses of the life without convinced me, or rather showed me, in lightning-flashes of vision, that the exclusive assumptions of the lives with which I had been most intimate would not hold water. It remained for me, after many years, to find in the literary class (other artists would come under the same criticism, but I know less of them) people, who, bees in bonnets notwithstanding, were better and more lovable, taking them all round, than most of those I had known in other spheres of activity.

One or two practical counsels may be added to these hints. Although the best work is usually done when leisure and inclination assist, the rule has exceptions, and we must all cultivate the power of buckling-to at the desk in spite of *malaise* and unwillingness. Again: we should endeavour to write things when the impulse is fresh, and before they have become commonplaces in our own minds. Again: if troubled with superfoetation of thought (which is often a sign of relaxed mental fibre), we should not vex ourselves with our own incapacity to overtake all our schemes or chisel out all our fine ideas. For some people to do all the things they have planned, and carefully planned too, would take them the whole day and night all the year round.

Let us hope there will be no misapprehension as to the right of "aspirants" to seek help and counsel, and the duty of those who can give them either to do so. The only question is, *when*. The first thing for the "aspirant" to do is to make quiet experiments, all by himself, for the purpose of determining to some extent his own power and place. To say nothing of stories in point which are public property, I could add numbers, illustrating the general rule that the "aspirant" who has stuff in him begins bashfully and tentatively on his own responsibility and does not *begin* by asking assistance. To make such a commencement raises a presumption that the person lacks that degree of confidence in himself which usually accompanies merit, and also lacks something of the only kind of humility which is worth having.

Lastly, I should rejoice with savage joy if I could quicken in others a just hatred of the literary man who can get himself convinced at a week's notice; the man who cottons, especially the one who cottons to Philistia; who flaunts his natural and very safe bunting of expediency in the eyes of the crowd who love it, but snatches also, when he thinks it will answer, at the rent, red flags of heroic daring. When Charles Lamb was asked if he knew Mr. So-and-so, and liked him, he answered, "No, I don't know him, but, at a venture, d—— him." Now I *do* know the type here hinted at, for it is not uncommon; and, without any "venture" at all, I "say ditto to Mr." Lamb.

MATTHEW BROWNE.



## THE CRITICAL CASE OF MAJOR ONEBY.

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It was the year 1726; and George the First was on the throne of England, and Sir Robert Walpole at the helm of her destinies. London, and the country generally, was just recovering,—or hardly yet recovering from the bursting of the South Sea bubble. In July, 1720, the stock stood at £1,000 per cent. In August, Walpole, when applied to by the Earl of Pembroke for advice upon the subject, whispered in his ear: “I can only tell you what I’ve done myself; I have just sold out at £1,000 per cent., and I’m fully satisfied.” By the 18th of that month the stock stood at £850; on the 29th of September it had fallen to £175! The crash of ruin had of course been tremendous, as the mania for sudden wealth and the spirit of gambling had been intense. And both the ruin and the spirit which had led to it contributed to bring down the tone of social morals, manners, and feeling to perhaps the lowest ebb to which they have ever fallen in this country. The mania for play infested the whole body of society to an unprecedented degree. High and low, court and city, male and female, all were infected by the contagion. When the *Tatler* was started in 1709, the public was told that “all accounts of gallantry, pleasure, and entertainment shall be under the article of ‘White’s Chocolate House;’ Poetry under that of ‘Will’s Coffee-house;’ learning under the title of ‘The Grecian;’ Foreign and Domestic News you will have from St. James’s Coffee-house; and what else I shall on any other subject offer shall be dated from my own apartment.” But it is the *Tatler* himself who tells us that “Will’s” is very much changed from what it used to be—“Where you used to see songs, epigrams, and satires in the hands of every one you met, you have now only a pack of cards.” About the same time we find complaints that the English love for music was dying, or had died out. We know how large a part music held in the social gatherings and enjoyments of England a hundred years before the time we are speaking of. Under the first of the Georges it seems to have expired. Not in one house in a hundred among the well-to-do classes, we are told by some social chronicler of the time, was such a thing as a harpsichord to be met with. The Italian opera was introduced, it is true, much about this time; but it was supported wholly by fashion, and very little love for music could be predicated of its frequenters solely on the evidence of their patronage of it. The old English school of music was dead; and it is a very noteworthy fact that a

very remarkable lowering in the general tone of society was contemporary with the extinction of it.

In 1720, the wife of James Edward Stuart had given a fresh impetus and encouragement to the hopes and schemes of the Jacobites by giving birth to a son; and the Bishop of Rochester, Atterbury, that most able, most active, most unscrupulous, and most dangerous of partisans, had declared that this was "the most acceptable news which can reach the ears of a good Englishman." In the summer of 1722 a plot was ripe for the invasion of England by the Pretender and the Duke of Ormond; but the conspirators were so imprudent as to apply to the Regent of France for the aid of five thousand men; and Philip, holding different views on such matters from those of Louis XIV., had immediately informed the British minister at Paris of the application. Walpole therefore was perfectly well informed, not only of the entire proposed plan of action of the conspirators, but also of the names of all the leaders among them. The King was advised to abstain from his usual annual journey to Hanover; a camp was formed in Hyde Park, and several persons, a couple of clergymen, a couple of Irish priests, a couple of lords, and a young barrister were apprehended. When, however, a few months later, in August, 1722, Atterbury was arrested and sent to the Tower, a very violent fever of excitement was produced throughout the Church and the whole of the High Church party. And this state of things also contributed powerfully to produce the low condition of morals which specially marked that period. For it not only caused an entire and utter divorce between religion and moral conduct, but placed the ministers of the former in a position of antagonism to the law. Prayers were offered up in the London churches for Atterbury when he was arrested for conspiracy against the established Government of the country! A good Churchman was then one who in heart, if not by his acts, was a criminal in the eyes of the Government; and it needs but little perspicacity to understand how such a state of things must have affected the tone of public morality.

It was a time when partizan spirit blinded men and ruled them so despotically that Dean Swift did not scruple to be guilty of the basest falsehoods in the Drapier Letters, written by him for the purpose of inflaming the unreasonable fury of the Irish against the Government, on the well-known occasion of the Wood's halfpence; and when men saw a Chancellor of England—Thomas Parker, Earl of Macclesfield—impeached and found guilty of prostituting his high office, by selling Masterships in Chancery, and conniving at the frauds of those officers in trafficking with the trust-money of suitors, and the estates of widows and orphans. It was in 1725 that Parker was condemned to perpetual exclusion from all office, and to a fine of thirty thousand pounds—a punishment which Lord Campbell considers, as he well might, a mild one.

It was the time when news came to England that Admiral Hosier, blockading Porto Bello, in reply to the menaces of Spain and Austria, had died there of yellow fever, together with a great number of England's seamen; and when old Lord Portmore, in his eightieth year, left England to defend Gibraltar, of which he was governor, against the Spaniard, and did so successfully for four months, till the enemy lost heart, and raised the siege.

It was a time when men wore the dress which is even yet familiar to our eyes, from its being still used on occasions of ceremony at court; and every man who called himself a gentleman carried a sword; when the hoops of the ladies were at their maximum of extravagant size, and when Tory dames and Whig dames distinguished themselves by the position of the patches on their painted faces.

It is difficult to believe that any man, who has made himself at all acquainted with the picture of the London world as it then existed, can doubt of the very great improvement which, much as there may be still to find fault with, has been achieved by our society since those days. We are told, however, not only that such *laudatores temporis acti* exist, but that they have been becoming more numerous of late. The perception of the ills they have around them, which the intense bull's-eye light of publicity under which we live makes more strong and striking than has ever been the case in any other age of the world, generates the notion that it would be well to fly to those which, in truth, they know not of.

For the consideration of those whose minds may incline in this direction, here is the story of an evening at "Will's" in those days, and of the results that followed from it.

On the 2nd of February, 1726, the tragedy of *Hecuba* was presented for the first time at Drury Lane. It was not successful. Its author, Richard West, Lord Chancellor of Ireland, complains in his preface to the published work that his tragedy was damned because it was not heard. "A rout of Vandals," he says, "in the galleries intimidated the young actresses, disturbed the audience, and prevented all attention." The play, however, was unquestionably damned; for it was acted on two subsequent nights by Booth, Wilks, Mrs. Oldfield, &c., to all but empty benches. Before the end of the year the literary Chancellor died—whether or no broken-hearted at his dramatic failure does not appear.

Now, among the "rout of Vandals" who damned the Chancellor's play were a party of gentlemen, consisting of Mr. John Rich, Mr. Michael Blunt, Mr. Thomas Hawkins, Mr. William Gower, and Major John Oneby. Respecting the first four, though they all bear well-known names, the history of the following facts tell us nothing. They belonged probably to the class of "young men about town." Gower is, as it will be seen, addressed by Oneby as "young man;"

and the probability is that they were all much younger than the Major.

Of him the following particulars have been preserved. He was the son of a reputable attorney at Barwell in Leicestershire, who designed to bring his son up to his own profession. His mother was a near relative of Sir Matthew Wright, to whom the custody of the great seal had been committed early in the reign of Queen Anne, and it had been hoped that some place might be procured by his interest for young Oneby—"some genteel employment," as the records of that day have it. Nothing better, however, was to be got than a place of train-bearer, which the "aspiring and haughty temper" of the young candidate for genteel employment indignantly rejected. "His great spirit" still contented itself to wait a little while, in the hope that the gentility of pay without work might yet be offered to him. But as the months wore on, and this hope still failed him, and the notion of working through life as a country attorney was not to be entertained for a moment, he "took up a resolution of going abroad into the army." A commission was easily obtained in those days. They were days when our troops were swearing so terribly in Flanders. Thither the "aspiring and haughty" young man betook himself, and fought under Marlborough, "distinguishing himself in several battles and sieges, and receiving several wounds." One of his adventures in Flanders was a quarrel with a cavalry officer at Bruges, whereupon they "went out of the camp," and fought a duel, resulting in the cavalry man's death the next day. Oneby was tried by court-martial, and honourably acquitted, the duel being adjudged to have been fought fairly. Not long afterwards we find our Major at Port Royal, in Jamaica, fighting another duel with one Lieutenant Tooley, whom he also killed. But Tooley having been "perfectly reconciled to Mr. Oneby" before he died, the Major "was never called to account" in the matter. Having served in various parts of the world for two-and-twenty years, he found himself major in the regiment of dragoons commanded by the Hon. Brigadier Honeywood. But being reduced to half-pay on the peace of Utrecht, he returned to England, "versed in all kinds of vice, particularly gaming, to which he had much addicted himself in the camp, and had there met several revolutions of fortune, sometimes an auspicious hand of dice having enabled him to make an entertainment for the chief generals in the army." On his return to England he "associated himself with the principal gamesters of this town (London), designing to support himself after their example, and frequented all the public places of resort where gentlemen played, being seldom without cards or dice in his pockets."

So that we are now tolerably well able to understand what was the purpose of the Major's haughty and aspiring mind and great spirit

when he, then in his fifty-third year, led the party of young men, who had been uproariously damning the poor Chancellor's play, first to Will's Coffee-house, and thence to the Castle Tavern in Drury Lane.

There they sat down to drink ; for it would seem that, despite the frolic mood engendered by the work of damning *Hecuba*, the party were not yet ripe for the aspiring Major's purpose. And it was not till after the fourth bottle had been emptied, that the prisoner called for a box and dice. The "drawer" replied that they had none in the house.

"Why then," said the Major, "bring the pepper-box."

That cleverly-imagined substitute was brought, and dice were "found on the table," none of the young men knowing, as they afterwards declared, where they came from or how they got there. It would seem, however, that the four bottles hardly did their work sufficiently ; for none of the younger members of the party were much inclined to play. They said they would play low, none of them "setting above half-a-guinea." Apparently also one among them at all events had some notion that they were not in the safest possible company ; for Mr. Hawkins declared afterwards that he had "no great inclination to game, *especially to set*" the Major. After a trifling loss accordingly, Mr. Hawkins declined to play any further ; at which the Major appeared greatly disgusted, and asked him why he refused.

In reply to which Hawkins told him he "should use his own pleasure, whether it were agreeable to his—the Major's—humour or not."

The others continued playing, and Mr. Gower lost thirty shillings.

Mr. Rich then said, "Who will set me three half-crowns?"

Upon which Mr. Gower took something from his pocket, and put it down on the table, concealing it with his hand, saying as he did so, "I'll set ye three pieces." And then lifting his hand, he let them see three halfpence. This was looked upon as a jest by the other young men ; but the Major appeared very much affronted at it. "That is very impertinent," he said, "to set three halfpence."

"What do you mean by impertinent?" said Gower.

"You are an impertinent puppy!" returned the Major, and, taking up a bottle, he threw it at Gower's head. It narrowly missed his head, and knocked some of the powder out of his wig.

Gower in return "tossed" a glass or a candlestick—it seems to be not clear which—at the Major, but it fell short of him.

Both men thereupon ran to their swords, which they had hung up on the wall of the room. Gower, being nimblest, got his sword first, and drew it ; but did not advance on his adversary, contenting himself with standing in a posture of defence at a good distance from him. The Major advanced on Gower ; but Mr. Rich stepped in between them and prevented him. Whereupon Gower threw aside

his sword, and they all sat down again, and continued to drink for about half an hour. At the end of which time Gower, offering his hand to the Major, said, "Come, Major, let us be reconciled; words in heat may be forgot and forgiven."

The Major answered, "God damn you, you lie! I'll have your blood, by God!"

Then turning to Mr. Hawkins, he said, "This is all along of you!"

Hawkins answered, "Why then, if ye have done with him and have anything to say to me, I am your man, and will see you out!"

"No!" said the Major, "I have another chap first."

Upon this, Mr. Blunt, in the hope of bringing on a reconciliation and preventing future mischief, invited all the party to dine with him on the morrow. To which the Major answered, "No, God damn ye! I'll dine with none of ye."

"Are ye angry, sir? Have ye anything to say to me?" said Blunt.

"Or to me?" said Hawkins.

"Or to me?" said Rich.

But the Major replied that he had nothing to say to any of them.

It was then between two and three in the morning, and the party got up to leave the room, the Major "hanging his great rug-coat on his shoulders," as they did so. Mr. Hawkins went out first, Mr. Blunt next, then Mr. Gower, and Mr. Rich and the Major came last. But they were hardly outside the door of the room, when Major Oneby called to Gower, "Hark ye, young man, a word with ye!"

Gower turned back. The two men re-entered the room, and the door was immediately shut to violently, shutting out the others. Then a clashing of swords was heard, and a loud stamp on the floor, which Rich guessed must be made by Oneby, because he was a very heavy man.

Blunt and Rich tried to enter the room, but could not open the door. The drawer, however, coming to their assistance, they effected an entrance—Blunt first, and Rich close behind him. The Major was then next the door, and standing with his sword drawn in his right hand, the point of it being toward Gower, whom he held by the shoulder with his left hand. Gower then closed with the Major, "but in such a manner as if he rather fell towards him through weakness than otherwise." They put Gower into a chair, and sent for a surgeon, who found him mortally wounded in the lower part of the stomach, from which wound he died on the next day.

Rich told Oneby, as they left the room, that he feared that he had killed Gower.

"No!" said the Major; "I might have done it if I would; but I have only frightened him. But suppose I had killed him, I know what I do in these affairs. For I had killed him to-night in

the heat of passion, I should have had the law on my side ; but if I had done it at any other time, it would have looked like a set meeting, and not a rencounter."

All which nice technicalities duly considered, had no doubt determined the experienced Major to finish his man that night, instead of waiting till the next day.

Mr. Blunt, on coming up to part the two men, received a trifling wound in the stomach ; but he was unable to say how it was done. He thought it could not have been done by Gower, because, when he entered the room, he saw no sword in Gower's hand ; and Rich, on the contrary, found his sword afterwards at the other side of the room. Rich also declared that he had asked Gower on his death-bed if he received his wound fairly ? To which the dying man answered faintly, " I think I did—but—I don't know—what might have happened—if you had not—come in."

Here follows the Major's own account of the matter, as he gave it when placed on his trial :—

"A wager was laid between Mr. Rich and Mr. Blunt concerning Mr. Mills's acting the part of Cæsar in the play of *Julius Cæsar*, and it was lost by Mr. Blunt. After this a box and dice were called for, but not by me. The drawer said he had dice, but no box, upon which somebody called for the pepper-box. I flung a main at 12d., and passed it about. Mr. Hawkins refusing, I said I thought there was as good fellowship in a little play as in altogether drinking. Then we played for half-a-crown or three shillings. And when the box came round again, the rest likewise refused to play. At last the deceased offered to set three halfpence, which I said was very impertinent. He called me rascal. 'You impertinent puppy,' says I, 'what do you mean by that?' Upon which he threw a glass at my head, and drew upon me. I told him he acted basely in drawing upon me, when it was he that gave the affront. After this I put on my great coat, and was going out. Mr. Hawkins had slipped away, and the rest being gone out of the room, the deceased pushed the door to, and drew upon me, and wounded me in the knee, and cut my fingers. I parried and closed with him. He endeavoured to stab me in the back ; at which time Mr. Blunt came in, and received a wound in his belly, which must have been by the deceased's sword."

The previous account given above of the occurrences of the evening is taken from the essentially concurrent testimony of Hawkins, Rich, and Blunt. And it will be seen that the Major's statement was unquestionably false in a great variety of particulars.

The jury before whom the case was tried brought in a lengthy special verdict, reciting the facts very nearly as they have been told above, and declaring that they found them to be proven, but praying the advice of the court whether this be murder or manslaughter.

And that was the question which made Major Oneby's case a critical

one, and which renders it still an interesting and ruling case to lawyers.

Had Major Oneby been guilty of murder? or only of manslaughter, as he, "knowing what he did in such affairs," and according to his own knowing calculations, imagined? Of course, the reader, who has had the foregoing exact statement of the circumstances laid before him, feels no more doubt that the attack on Gower was to all intents and purposes as essentially a murderous attack as any murderer was ever guilty of, than he does in the case of any felon ever hung. No doubt, the motive to the crime was the passion of anger acting on a thoroughly depraved and ill-conditioned mind and ungoverned temper. But that is a totally different thing from the *furor brevis*—the uncontrollable phrenzy of passion, which the law recognises as a human infirmity sufficiently distinguishable in its character from malice *prepense* to place the deeds resulting from it in a different category from those of the murder. If, under grievous provocation, a man strikes out instantly, the law will not hold him to be guilty of murder, even though the result of his blow should be the death of the person struck. But if it is clear that the mind of the striker, however angry, has been traversed by the thought, however rapid, that to avenge the injury done him he would kill his adversary, or by any other act of deliberation upon any subject whatever, then murder has been committed. Thus, if A. pulls B.'s nose, and B. *having a knife in his hand* strikes with it and kills A., it is not murder. But if B., instead of having the knife in his hand, snatch it up from a neighbouring table and strike with it, a death so inflicted will be murder, because the taking of the weapon proves an act of deliberate intention, however rapidly conceived.

There is on record a very curious case, which was tried, I think, at Winchester, and much subsequently to the case of Major Oneby, which illustrates the theory of the law on the subject in a very striking manner. A soldier under grievous provocation *drew* his bayonet, and killed the offender. And this was judged to be manslaughter, in accordance with the eloquently-urged pleading of an advocate for the prisoner, who maintained that for a soldier to draw his bayonet was as instinctive an act as for any other man to double his fist and hit out with it; that the act did not necessarily imply any thought of killing, but was the wholly unconscious recurrence to a means of defence as natural to a soldier as a bite from a dog, or a kick from the hoof of a horse. The decision was probably wrong. But the case no less illustrates the theory which governs the subject.

The question submitted to the court by the jury in Oneby's case was tried before the Court of King's Bench in Hilary Term, 1726, Serjeant Darnall for the prosecution, and Serjeant Eyre, for the defence. The arguments on both sides were poor, weak, and con-



fused. It is notable, however, that it was consentingly held on both sides that the law would not regard mere words as any provocation at all!—a dictum which surely the practice of the present day would not recognise. As a sample of the nonsense talked by these learned gentlemen, it may be mentioned that Serjeant Darnall maintained that it was a worse provocation to call a man a puppy than to call him a rascal, *because “puppy” is the name of a beast!* The learned serjeant, as well as his adversary, seems to have forgotten, or not to have known, that the same may be said of the term “rascal.”

Unless the talk of the two learned serjeants is to be held as having had the same effect as the speech of that “Mr. Parker, who made that darker, which was dark enough without,” upon the memorable occasion which was wound up by Chancellor Eldon, saying, “I doubt,”—unless, under this hypothesis, it will seem strange at the present day that the Court of King’s Bench could not come to any decision on the question before them, but ordered that the point should be argued before the whole body of the judges.

The trial thus ordered took place at Serjeants’ Inn in Easter Term following, on the 6th of May. It is observable that neither of the gentlemen employed on the former occasion are engaged in the new trial. Before all the judges Mr. Lee was for the King, and Mr. Kettleby (Serjeant Baynes, who had been retained, being ill) for the prisoner.

The arguments of these gentlemen have not been preserved; but we have the summing up and judgment of the Chief Justice Raymond recorded at considerable length. After recapitulating the facts of the case, and the circumstances under which it had been brought before a court composed of all the judges of England, the Chief Justice declared that he spoke in the names of all his colleagues, their opinion having been entirely unanimous.

He begins by setting forth the legal theory of malice, the presence of which is necessary to constitute murder, points out that malice may be implied or expressed, that it may be general or particular, and then shows it to have been proved that Major Oneby had acted under the influence of expressed malice against his victim.

The remainder of the Chief Justice’s judgment is not so lucid and well-ordered as it might be, or as a judgment pronounced from the bench would be at the present day. His lordship unnecessarily complicates and confuses the matter by going into considerations as to the amount and nature of the provocation given, and the other circumstances of the quarrel. Whereas the real point and gist of the matter lay in the fact that Oneby had acted with deliberation, and not in the heat of passion. The truth is that, up to a period much more recent than the date of this case, the maxims, dicta, and practice of our courts were under the confusing influence of the ideas generated by the practice of duelling. Thus Chief Justice Raymond lays it

down as acknowledged law, that if A. and B. fall out upon a sudden, and they presently agree to fight, and each fetches his weapon, and go into the field to fight, and one of them kills the other,—this is but manslaughter. Again, he says, if reproachful language passes between A. and B., and A. bids B. draw, and they both draw—it is not material which of them draws first—and they both fight, and mutual passes were made, death ensuing from thence will be only manslaughter, because it was of a sudden, *and each ran the same hazard of his life*. Now, the former of the cases here supposed would certainly be deemed murder at the present day. And in the second the suddenness, and not the community of risk, must be relied on to remove the result from the category of murder. And a little further on in his judgment his lordship very clearly says as much, and contradicts his previous position about the community of risk. If two men fall out in the morning, he says, and meet and fight in the afternoon, and one of them is slain, this is murder; for there was time to allay the heat, and their meeting is of malice.

It is also laid down very clearly that no mere circumstance of the man slain having been the first to strike, will prevent the slayer from being guilty of murder if other facts show him to have been moved by malice. As, if A. and B. fall out, and A. declares that he will not strike, but will give B. a pot of ale to touch him, and B. thereupon strikes A., and then A. kills him,—that will be murder. Two fall out of a sudden in the town, and they by agreement go into the field presently, and one kills the other,—murder. This last case, which the Chief Justice adduces, would seem to be in perfect contradiction to his law in that case, mentioned by him in the earlier part of his judgment, in which two men are supposed to “*fetch their swords*,” and then fight with the resulting death, called manslaughter only.

The case, however, upon which the counsel for the defence seem mainly to have relied, was a curious one, known as Rowley's Case, 12 Coke, 87. Two boys were fighting: one got a bloody nose, and ran to his father, three-quarters of a mile away, to complain. The father seized a cudgel, ran the three-quarters of a mile to the spot where the other boy was, and struck him on the head with it, so that he died; and this was held to be manslaughter, because the father's passion had not cooled, and the law cannot and does not fix any length of time as sufficient for the cooling of passion, seeing that, as Chief Justice Raymond remarked, the temperament of men and their intelligence are so different one from another.

This case of Rowley's may suffice to show how uncertain was the law in fixing the limit between murder and manslaughter. But it did not avail Major Oneby. It was held that he had clearly had time for his passion to cool. And to the hypothesis put forward by his counsel to the effect that, when the Major and Gower were shut into the room at last just before the fatal wound was given, there was

nothing to show that a fresh quarrel did not arise, in the heat of which the death-blow might have been given—it was replied by their lordships that where the slayer of a man seeks to reduce his deed from murder to manslaughter by alleging the suddenness of the provocation and quarrel, it is for him to show the suddenness. The *onus probandi* lies with him.

In reply to the demand what he had to say why sentence should not be pronounced upon him, the prisoner declared, as he hoped to find mercy at the hands of Almighty God, that he had never uttered the words, "Damn ye, I'll have your blood." And, further, he urged his long and faithful services in the army as a ground of recommendation to mercy. It was replied to him that a jury having found that he *did* use the words in question, his allegation to the contrary was of no avail; and, to the second, that that was a court of justice, and that mercy must be sought elsewhere. And it was ordered that the prisoner should be brought up again at the end of the week to receive judgment. But before the day arrived, an event happened which encouraged his hope that a pardon might be obtained for him. On the 11th of June, George I. died in his carriage as he was hastening with all speed towards Osnabruck, where his brother, the titular bishop, lived, as is related with such picturesqueness of detail by Carlyle in his "Life of Frederick." And Major Oney's application for mercy must have been one of the first matters brought before George II. But the new monarch saw no reason why his accession should interfere with the course of justice, as unanimously directed by all the judges of England; and on the 19th of June, John Oney was ordered for execution on Monday, the 3rd of July. But on the morning of that day he opened his veins with a penknife, and bled to death. On the morning appointed for the execution, we are told, he requested that he might be left to himself that he might compose himself against the coming of his friends. About seven he said faintly to his footman, who came into the room, "Who is that, Philip?" A gentleman coming to his bedside soon after, called, "Major! Major!" but hearing no answer, he drew open the curtains, and found him weltering in his blood, and just expiring. A surgeon was called; but before he came, the Major was dead.

From which contemporary account it will be observed that in many respects the proceedings connected with the last days of a condemned prisoner were very different at that day from the ordering of them at the present time.

Major Oney was buried at a cross road, and a stake was driven through his body.

T. A. TROLLOPE.

## HAWTHORNE'S FRENCH AND ITALIAN NOTE-BOOKS.

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THE interest which men of letters especially, but also every lay admirer of Hawthorne, have taken in the reading of his Note-Books, will find a fresh stimulus in the present volumes,\* which, it is understood, will close the series. They complete that revelation of the man and his method which the admiration excited by his works imperatively demanded. We see here the same faithful and unassuming observation of men and nature which marks the American Note-Books, but carried to greater perfection. Like the English Notes, these are less fragmentary and disconnected than the American, showing by their continuity of style the increasing inner demand of the author for rotundity and unity in everything the least that he wrote. The polished skill with which he brings before us the greater or smaller objects of note along the route seems to reach the summit of artistic power. There is an interval of nearly twenty-three years between the date of the first entry in the American journals and that which heads the present volumes; but no diminution of force or refinement is visible in the operations of the writer's mind. They bring us, in the annals of Hawthorne's thought, to within a few years of his death, and show that to the last he was enlarging and putting forth—a growing man.

The observation during the journey to Rome—his stay in Paris being brief—is rather more external than otherwise. He catches with miraculous ease the appearance and surface charm of things; but can pierce with equal power to their heart, embodying in language their most intangible glamour. There is no straining after novelty; he never loses his simple, dignified identity in the mask of caricatured sensation, as travel-writers are too wont. The charm of this book is very simple: it consists only in the fact that, professing to be Hawthorne, it is Hawthorne, and neither an infusion of other minds dipped out with his own pen upon the page, nor a spicy decoction from the clear fluid of his real, simple impressions.

The notes of his experience while dwelling in Rome and Florence deserve admiration for more than this trueness to himself—the clear insight which they display in various subjects, the calm and trenchant precision with which his speculations go to the root of fifty different matters. There is in general throughout the book a more diversified

\* London: Strahan & Co.

mental activity and a greater play of fancy than in the English Note-Books. This fact is in consonance with the different character of the work inspired by Italian influence and that which was the product of English soil. "Our Old Home" is a collection of articles dealing chiefly with local English topics, and treated with solid reality in the author's most genial mood; while "The Marble Faun," better known in England as "Transformation," is a profound speculation in human nature, under the garb of a most picturesque and imaginative romance. There is, perhaps, no more delicate comment on the exquisite sensibility of Hawthorne than this, that he should be so open to climatic influence in his writing. The quality of his genius may be compared to that of a violin, which owes its fine properties to the seasoning of tempered atmospheres, and transmits a thrill of sunshine through the vibrations of its resonant wood: his utterances are modulated by the very changes of the air. It is a pleasure to mark the responses of this finely-poised mind to each and every impression. The alternate insight and self-criticism with which he views the famous art in Italian galleries show how loyal he was with himself to the truth. He never goes against his grain to admire the prescribed, nor will he assume that his own judgment is correct. The questionings with which he qualifies each opinion advanced show us the smelting process by which he extracted truth by grains from the uncertain ore of thought. He turns a statement over and over, handles it in all moods, before he can consent to take a solid grasp, and incorporate it as belief. The flow of his thought includes both poles, as where he says: "Classic statues escape you, with their slippery beauty, as if they were made of ice. Rough and ugly things can be clutched. This is nonsense, and yet it means something." One must admire the frankness with which he disapproves superannuated pictorial art. Blotted and scaling frescoes hurt his mind, he says, in the same manner that dry-rot in a wall will impart disease to the human frame. In Rome he recoils as if wounded from certain dingy picture-frames and unvarnished pictures. On this point we must quote, to be fair, from the editor's note in explanation. She says:—"Mr. Hawthorne's inexorable demand for perfection in all things leads him to complain of grimy pictures, and tarnished frames, and faded frescoes, distressing beyond measure to eyes that never failed to see everything before them with the keenest apprehension. The usual careless observation of people, both of the good and the imperfect, is much more comfortable in this imperfect world. But the insight which Mr. Hawthorne possessed was only equalled by his oversight, and he suffered in a way not to be readily conceived from any failure in beauty—physical, moral, or intellectual. It may give an idea of this exquisite nicety of feeling to mention that one day he took in his fingers a half-bloomed rose, without blemish, and smiling

with an infinite joy, remarked, 'This is perfect. On earth only a flower is perfect.'"

The present volumes do not afford so many of those quaint suggestions for tale or romance which made a chief charm of the American Note-Books. In accounting for this, something may be allowed to the advancing age of the writer, and something to the rapid change of scene during travel, and the multitude of fleeting impressions showered upon the mind in sight-seeing. But from other sources it may be proved that the number of ideas intended to subtend future fiction was at this period in fact multiplied. Their absence from the journals must be ascribed to the natural increase of a tendency on the part of the author to expend all the labour in his journals upon materialities, actualities—upon the description of multiform nature, human and physical, and art, rather than upon imperfect hints at the dreams yet to be embodied. There is, we may conjecture, a more decided consciousness that the idea of a poet must develop itself in poem or tale much as the soul develops itself in a human body, and that for this reason he will do well to concern himself chiefly with producing the work's grosser substance, sure that the essence will imbue it, as certainly as the soul a new body.

No one falls more completely under the head of ideal writers than Hawthorne. At the same time, no one has more devotedly subjected himself to the study of Nature in her every manifestation. What can surpass the delicate and wise humour of his study of pigs at Brook Farm, or the delicious reality of the ancient hens in the Pyncheon Garden? Hawthorne, in short, is a complete type of the artist, learning Nature accurately, rooting his whole mental system in the solid foundation of the broad earth and its everyday life, yet projecting in his works an ideal truth that branches into airiest space.

GEORGE P. LATHROP.

## HANNAH.

*J. Kober.*

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

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### CHAPTER XV.

ALONE, in a foreign land—with only a child for company and a servant for protection, this, in the strange vicissitudes of Hannah's life, was her position now. Accidentally, rather than intentionally, for Lady Dunsmore had taken all care of her, and meant her to be met at Paris by Madame Arthenay, the lady to whom she sent her, and who, with herself, was the accomplice of Hannah's running away.

For she had literally "run away"—by not only the concurrence, but the compulsion of her faithful friend, who saw that the strain was growing too hard to bear. Living within reach of Bernard's visits, which were half a joy and half a dread, exposed to the continual gossip of Easterham—since though the Moat-House had entirely "cut" her, some of the other houses did not, but continued by letter a patronizing kindness most irritating—above all, suffering a painful inner warfare as to how far she was right in allowing Bernard to come and see her, since every time he came the cruel life of suspense he led seemed more and more to be making him—not merely wretched but something worse; all these trials, in course of time, did their work upon even the strong heart and healthy frame of Hannah Thelluson.

"You are breaking down," said the Countess, when one day towards the summer's end she came to take her young folks home. "This cannot last. You must do as I once suggested—go quite away."

"I cannot!" said Hannah, faintly smiling. "He would not let me." For she felt herself gradually succumbing to Bernard's impetuous will, and to the strength of a passion unto which impediments seemed to have given a force and persistency that had changed his whole character.

"Not let you go away? The tyrant! Men are all tyrants, you know. Very well. Then you must run away."

"He will follow me—as he once said he should—wherever I went."

"Indeed! Quite right of him. Still, as I object to tyranny, and as you will just now be much better without him than with him, I mean to help you to run away."

"But—the child!—he will miss her so. And I must have the child with me!"

"Of course. But do you think when a man is desperately in love he troubles himself much about a child? Hannah—my dear old goose! you will be a goose to the end of your days. Go and cackle over your little gosling, and leave me to manage everything for you."

Hannah obeyed, for she had come to that pass when her energies, and even her volition, seemed to have left her. She submitted tacitly to the Countess's plan, which was to send her quite out of England—to a far-away French town, Avranches, not easily reached, being beyond the limits of railways—where resided a dear old friend of Lady Dunsmore's, of whom she had often talked to Hannah—one Madame Arthenay.

"She will be the best protection you could have, for she herself married her sister's husband; as is constantly done in France, so no need of concealment, my dear. I shall just tell her everything. And you need not mind, even if Mr. Rivers does swoop down upon you some day—after his fashion. But he can't—Avranches is too far off. Nor will I let him, if I can help it. I shall tell him he must leave you in peace, to regain your strength and quiet your nerves. Good-bye now, and God bless you!"

The good Countess, as she made this hurried farewell on board the French steamboat, left them. Almost before Hannah knew where she was, or what she had consented to, she found herself alone with Rosie and Grace. Lady Dunsmore did not say what deeper reason she had for thus effecting a temporary separation, sudden and complete, between the lovers, even though it involved what she called the "kidnapping" of little Rosie. Knowing the world, and the men therein, a good deal better than her friend did, she foreboded for Hannah a blow heavier than any yet. That hapless elder brother, the present Sir Austin, was said to be in a dying state; and for Sir Bernard Rivers of the Moat-House, the last representative of so long a line, to contract an illegal marriage, in which his wife would be shut out of society, and his children held by law as illegitimate, was a sacrifice at which the most passionate lover might well hesitate. While, under these, or any circumstances, for him to doom himself for life to celibacy, was scarcely to be expected.

Lady Dunsmore had come to know Mr. Rivers pretty well by this time. She liked him extremely—as most women did—but her liking did not blind her to a conviction, founded on a certain Scotch proverb: "As the auld cock craws, the young cock learns"—that, when he was put to the crucial test, the world and his own family might be too strong for Sir Bernard. Therefore, on all accounts, she was glad at this time to get Hannah out of the way. But her plans, too hastily formed, somehow miscarried; for at Paris her two friends contrived to miss one another. When Miss Thelluson



reached Avranches it was to find Madame Arthenay away, and herself quite alone in that far-away place, with only Grace and the child.

At first this loneliness was almost pleasant. Ever since crossing the Channel she had felt lulled into a kind of stupor: the strange peace of those who have cut the cable between themselves and home, left all their burthens behind, and drifted away into what seems like "another and a better world." During her few days of travelling she had been conscious only of a sunshiny sky and smiling earth, of people moving about her with lively tongues and cheerful faces. Everything was entirely new, for she had never been abroad before, and whether the land was France or Paradise did not much matter. She had her child beside her, and that was enough.

She had Grace too. Many a servant is in trouble almost better than a friend; because a servant is silent—Grace was, even to a fault. Trouble had hardened her sorely. Even when, a few months before, the last blow had fallen, the last tie was broken between her and Jem Dixon—for their child had died—poor Grace had said only, "It is best. My boy might have grown up to blame his mother for his existence." Words, which when Hannah heard, made her shiver in her inmost soul.

That the girl knew perfectly well her mistress's position with respect to Mr. Rivers, was evident. When he came, the nurse abstained from intruding upon them, and kept other intruders away, in a manner which, though not obnoxiously shown, occasionally touched, sometimes vexed, but always humiliated Hannah. Still, in her sad circumstances, she was glad to have the protection of even this dumb watch-dog of a faithful servant.

Grace seemed greatly relieved when the sea rolled between them and England. "It would take a good bit of time and trouble for anybody to come after us here," said she, as they climbed the steep hill on the top of which sits the lovely tower of Avranches, and looked back on the long line of straight road, miles upon miles, visible through the green, woody country, which they had traversed in driving from Granville. "It feels quite at the world's end; and, unless folk knew where we were, they might as well seek after a needle in a hay-rick. A good job too!" muttered she, with a glance at the worn face of her dear mistress, who faintly smiled.

"Nobody does know our whereabouts exactly, Grace. We have certainly done what I often in my youth used to long to do—run away, and left no address."

"I'm glad of it, ma'am. Then you'll have a good long rest."

She had, but in an unexpected way. They found Madame Arthenay absent, and her little house shut up.

"We must take refuge in the hotel," said Hannah, with a weary look. "It seems a pleasant place to lie down and rest in."

It was; and for a few hours she lingered about with Rosie in

the inn garden—a green, shady, shut-in nook, with only a stray tourist or two sitting reading on its benches; full of long, low espaliers, heavy with Normandy pears. There were masses of brilliant autumn flowers, French and African marigolds, zinnias, and so on—treasures that the child kept innocently begging for, with a precocious enjoyment of the jingle of rhyme. “Give me pretty posie, to stick in Rosie ’tittle bosie!” Hannah roused herself once or twice, to answer her little girl, and explain that the flowers were not hers to gather, and that Rosie must be content with a stray daisy or two, for she never exacted blind obedience where she could find a reason intelligible to the little wakening soul. But when, after a tear or two, Rosie submitted to fate, and entreated Tannie to “come with Rosie find daisies—lots of daisies!” Aunt Hannah also succumbed.

“Tannie can’t come; she must go to her bed, my darling. Poor Tannie is so tired.”

And for the first time in her life she went to bed before the child, laying her head down on the pillow with a feeling as if it would be a comfort never to lift it up any more.

After these ensued days—three or four—of which she never liked to speak much afterwards. She lay in a nervous fever, utterly helpless, and when, had it not been for the few words of French which Grace was able to recall—the Misses Melville having amused themselves once with teaching her—and the quickness, intelligence, and tender-heartedness of the inn servants—good, simple French women, with the true womanly nature which is the same all the world over—things would have gone hard with Hannah Theluson.

More than once, vague and wandering as her thoughts were, she bitterly repented having “run away;” thereby snatching Rosie from her natural protector, and carrying her off into these strange lands, whence, perhaps, she might never be able to bring her back, but herself lie down to rise up no more. But by-and-by even this vain remorse vanished, and she was conscious of thinking about nothing beyond the roses on the chintz bed-curtains, and the pattern of the paper-hangings—birds of paradise, with their sweeping tails; the angle which the opposite house made against the sky, the curious shape of its tiling, and the name of the *boutiquier* inscribed thereon, the first few letters of which were cut off by her window-ledge. So childish had her mind grown, so calmly receptive of all that happened, however extraordinary, that when one day a kind-looking, elderly lady came into her room, and began talking in broken English to Grace and the child, and to herself in the sweetest French she ever heard, Hannah accepted the fact at once, and took scarcely more than half a day to get quite accustomed to Madame Arthenay.

She was one of those women, of which France may boast so many, as unlike our English notion of a Frenchwoman as the carica-

tures of John Bull who strut about on the French stage are like a real Briton. Feminine, domestic, though after having brought up two families, her sister's and her own, she now lived solitary in her pretty little nest of a house; a strict, almost stern Protestant; pure alike in act, and thoughts, and words,—you would hardly have believed she was born in the same land or came of the same race as the women who figure in modern French novels, or who are met only too often in modern Parisian society. As Grace said of her after she had gone, “Ma'am, I don't care how often she comes to see you, or how long she stays. She doesn't bother me one bit. She's just like an Englishwoman.”

—Which Madame Arthenay certainly was not, and would have smiled at the narrow-judging, left-handed compliment. But she was a noble type of the noblest bit of womanly nature, which is the same, or nearly the same, in all countries. No wonder Lady Dunsmore loved her, or that, as she prophesied, Hannah loved her too; in a shorter time than she could have thought it possible to love any stranger, and a foreigner likewise.

“Strangers and foreigners, so we each are to one another,” said the French lady early one morning, after she had sat up all night with Hannah—to give Grace a rest. “And yet we do not feel so; do we? I think it is because we both belong to the same kingdom—the kingdom of God.”

For underneath all her gaiety and lightness of heart, Madame Arthenay was a very religious woman—as, she told Hannah, “we Protestants” generally were; thoroughly domestic and home-loving likewise.

“It is a mistake to suppose that we French all fall in love with one another's wives and husbands, or that we compel our children to make cruel *mariages de convenance*, as you English fancy we do. My sister's was a love-marriage, like mine, and all my children's were. You would find us not so very different from yourselves if you once came and settled among us. Suppose you were to try?”

So said she, looking kindly at her; but though, as both knew, she had been told everything, this was the first time Madame Arthenay had made any allusion to Miss Thelluson's future or her own past. Besides, they did not talk very much, she speaking chiefly in French, which Hannah found it an effort to follow. But she loved to read the cosmopolitan language of the sweet eyes, to accept the good offices of the tender, skilful, useful hands. Years afterwards, when all its bitterness, and pain, and terror had died out, the only thing she remembered about that forlorn illness in a far-away French town, was the kindness of all the good French people about her, and especially of Madame Arthenay.

But when she was convalescent, Hannah's heart woke up from the stupor into which it had fallen. She wanted to get well all in

a minute, that she might have back her little Rosie, who had been spirited away from her by those compassionate French mothers, and was turning into *une petite Française* as fast as possible. Above all, she craved for news from home: it was a fortnight now since she had had one word—one line. She did not wish—nay, she dreaded—to have a letter from Bernard; but she would have liked to hear of him—how he took the news of her flight, whether he was angry with her, and whether he missed his child. But no tidings came, and she did not want to write till she was better. Besides, Madame Arthenay took all the writing things away.

“You are my slave, my captive. Madame la Comtesse exacts it,” said she in her pretty French. “You are not to do a single thing, nor to stir out of your room until I give you leave, which will likely be to-morrow. And now I must bid you adieu, as I have a friend coming who will stay the whole day. Could you rest here quiet, do you think, and spare me an hour of Grace and Rosie? I should like to show my friend the little English rose.”

Hannah promised vaguely, and was left alone; to study as heretofore the flowers on the chintz and the long-tailed birds on the wall. She was getting very weary of her imprisonment—she who had never before been confined to her room for a whole week. It was a lovely day; she knew that by the bit of intensely blue sky behind the house-tiles opposite, and the soft, sweet air that, together with the cheerful street noises of a foreign town, entered in at the open window. A longing to “rise up and walk” came over her—to go out and see what could be seen; above all, to catch a glimpse of that glorious view which she had noticed in coming up the hill—the sea-view, with Mont St. Michel in the distance; that wonderful rock castle, dedicated to her favourite angel (in the days when she was a poetical young lady she always had a statue of him in her room), St. Michael, the angel of high places, the angel who fights against wrong.

It was a vagary, more like a school-girl than a grown woman; but Hannah could not help it. She felt she must go out—must feel the fresh air and sunshine, and try if she could walk, if there was any remnant of health and strength left in her; for she would need both so much.

She was already dressed, for she had insisted upon it. Searching for her bonnet and shawl, and smiling with a pathetic pleasure to find she really could walk pretty well—also wondering, with childish amusement, as to whether, if Grace met her, she would not take her for a ghost—Hannah stole down through the quiet hotel, and out into the street—that picturesque street of Avranches which leads towards the public gardens, and the spot where, within six square feet, is piled up the poor remnant of its once splendid cathedral.

Madame Arthenay had described it, and the various features of the town, during the gentle, flowing, unexciting conversation which she

pertinaciously kept up by the invalid's bed-side, so Hannah easily found her way thither; tottering a little at first, but soon drinking in the life-giving stimulus of that freshest, purest air, blowing on a hill-top from over the sea. All her life, Hannah had loved high places; they feel nearer heaven somehow, and lift one above the petty pains and grovelling pleasures of this mortal life. Even now, weak as she was, she was conscious of a sensation of pleasure, as if her life were not all done. She wandered about, losing her way, and finding it again; or amusing herself by asking it of those kindly, courteous French folk, who, whenever they looked in her face, stopped and softened their voices, as if they knew she had been ill and in trouble. One of them—a benign-looking old gentleman, taking the air with his old wife, just like an English Darby and Joan—civilly pointed out to her the Jardin des Plantes as being a charming place to walk in, where madame would find easy benches to repose herself upon, and a sea-view, with Mont St. Michel in it, that was truly “*magnifique*.” Madame's own beautiful island could furnish nothing finer. Hannah smiled, amused at the impossibility of passing for anything but an Englishwoman, in spite of her careful French, and went thither.

It was a beautiful spot. Sick souls and weary bodies might well repose themselves there, after the advice of the good little fat Frenchman—how fat Frenchmen do grow sometimes! The fine air was soft as cream and strong as wine, and the cloudless sunshine lay round about like a flood; over land and sea—the undulating sweep of forest country on the right hand, and on the left the bay, with its solitary rock—fortress, prison, monastery—about which Madame Arthenay, in her charming small-talk, so fitted for a sick-room, had told stories without end.

Involuntarily, Hannah sat and thought of them now, and not of her own troubles; these seemed to have slipped away, as they often do in a short, sharp illness, and she woke refreshed, as after a night's sleep, able to assume again the burthen of the day. Only she lay and meditated, as one does before rising, in a dreamy sort of way; in which her old dreams came back to her. Looking at that lonely rock, she called up the figure of her saint—the favourite St. Michael of her girlhood, with his head bent forward and his sweet mouth firmly set; his hands leaning on his sword, ready to fight, able even to avenge, but yet an angel always; and there came into her that saving strength of all beaten-down, broken-hearted creatures—the belief, alas! often so faint—that God does sometimes send His messengers to fight against wrong; not merely to succour, but absolutely to fight.

“No, I will not die—not quite yet,” she said to herself, as in this far-distant nook of God's earth, which seemed to have His smile perpetually upon it, she thought of her own England, made homeless to her through trouble, and bitter with persecution. “Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! Here, perhaps, I might find rest. But still I

will not die. They shall not kill me. They may take my character away—they may make him forsake me, as I daresay he will; but I have strength in my soul, nevertheless. And I will fight against their cruelty—I will protest to the last that I had a right to love him, a right to marry him; that it would have been the best thing for him, for me, and the child. Oh, my Bernard! there is a deal of the angel in you; but if there were more of the St. Michael—if, instead of submitting to wrong, you could take up your sword and hew it down—But you cannot. I know, when the time comes, you will forsake me! But still—still—I shall have the child."

Thus sighed she; and then, determined to sigh no more, to complain no more, to any living creature, but to do her best to get health and strength of body and mind, Hannah rose up from the heap of stones where she had been sitting. With one fond look at that glorious picture which lay below her—earth, sea, and sky, equally beautiful, and blending together in the harmony which soothes one's soul into harmony too—she turned her steps homewards; that is, "*chez elle*," for to poor Hannah Thelluson there was not—would there ever be?—such a thing as home.

As she went she saw a figure coming towards her, walking rapidly, and looking round, as if searching for some one. Had it been possible—or, rather, had not the extreme improbability of such a thing made her stop a minute, and draw her hand across her eyes, to make sure that imagination was not playing her false—she should have said it was Bernard.

He saw her likewise; and the two ghosts—for strangely ghostly they both looked to one another's eyes—met.

"Hannah! how could you——"

"Bernard! oh, Bernard!"

She was so glad to see him—he could not help finding it out; nor did she try to hide it—she was too weak. She clung to his arm, her voice choking, her tears falling fast—tears of pure helplessness, and of joy also. He had not forsaken her.

"How could you run away in this manner? We have been searching for you—Madame Arthenay, Grace, and I—for hours."

"Not quite hours," said she, smiling at last. "It was fully one o'clock when I left my room. Was that what you meant by my running away?" For she was half afraid of him, gentle as he seemed, and wished to have the worst over at once.

Bernard shook his head.

"I cannot scold you now. I am only too happy to see you once again, my darling."

He had never called her so before; indeed, she was the sort of woman more to be honoured and loved in a quiet, silent way, than fondled over with caressing words. Still, the tenderness was very sweet to have—sweeter because she felt so miserably weak.

"How did you find me out?" she said, as they walked up the town. And it seemed as if now, for the first time, they were free to walk together, with no cruel eyes upon them, no backbiting tongues pursuing them.

"How did I find you? Why, I tracked you like a Red Indian. Of course I should—to the world's end! What else did you expect, I wonder?"

Hannah hardly knew what she had expected—what feared. In truth, she was content to bask in the present, with a passionate eagerness of enjoyment which those only know who have given up the future hopelessly and entirely.

In the course of the day she grew so rapidly better that, when Bernard proposed going for an hour or two to the house of Madame Arthenay, she assented. He seemed quite at home there—"flirted" with the sweet old French lady in the most charming manner. He had been with her since yesterday, she said; and was indeed the "friend" to whom she wished to show the little English Rose.

"Monsieur speaks French like a Frenchman, as he ought, having been at school at Caen, he tells me, for two years. He does credit to his Norman blood."

Which Madame Arthenay evidently thought far superior to anything Saxon, and that the great William had done us Britons the greatest possible honour in condescending to conquer us. But Hannah would not smile at the dear old lady, whom, she saw, Bernard liked extremely.

Soon they settled amicably and gaily to the most delicious of coffee, and the feeblest of tea, in Madame Arthenay's cottage—a series of rooms all on the ground-floor, and all opening into one another and into the garden—salon, salle-à-manger, two bed-chambers, and a kitchen; half of which was covered by a sort of loft, up which the one servant—a faithful old soul, who could do anything and put up with anything—mounted of nights to her bed. A *ménage* essentially French, with not a fragment of wealth or show about it; but all was so pretty, so tasteful, so suitable. It felt like living in a bird's nest, with green leaves outside and moss within—a nest one could live in like the birds, as innocently and merrily—a veritable bit of Arcadia. Mr. Rivers said so.

"Ah, you should come and live among us," said Madame Arthenay. "In this our Normandy, though we may be a century behind you in civilisation, I sometimes think we are a century nearer than you are to the long-past golden age. We lead simpler lives, we honour our fathers and mothers, and look after our children ourselves. Then, too, our servants are not so held wide apart from us as you hold yours. Old Jeanne, for instance, is quite a friend of mine."

"So is Grace," Hannah said.

"Ah, yes; poor Grace! she one day told me her story." And

then turning suddenly to Bernard. "I assure you, we are very good people here in Normandy. You might like us if you knew us. Monsieur Rivers, why not come among us, and resume the old name, and be Monsieur de la Rivière?"

Bernard started, looked earnestly at her, to see if any deeper meaning lurked under her pleasantry.

"Take care," he said; "many a true word is spoken in jest." And then he suddenly changed the conversation, and asked about an old Château de Saint Roque, which some one had told him was well worth seeing, and might be seen easily, as it was on sale.

"I know the present owner, a Lyons merchant, finds it dull. He bought it from the last *propriétaire*, to whom it had descended in a direct line, people say, ever since the Crusades; and—such a curious coincidence, Monsieur—the family were named de la Rivière. Who knows but you may be revisiting the cradle of your ancestors? If Miss Thelluson is able, you ought certainly to go and see it."

Bernard assented, and all was soon arranged. He was in one of his happiest moods, Hannah saw. He, like herself, felt the influence of the sunshiny atmosphere, within and without, in this pleasant nook of pleasant France—the distance from home-sorrows, the ease and freedom of intercourse with Madame Arthenay, who knew everything and blamed nothing. When, next day, they all met, and drove together across the smiling country, amusing themselves with the big, blue-bloused Norman peasant, who kept cracking his long whip and conversing with his horses in shrill patois, that resounded even above the jingle of their bells, Hannah thought she had seldom, in all the time they had known one another, seen him looking so gay.

Saint Roque was one of those châteaux of which there are many in Normandy, built about the time of the Crusades—half mansion, half fortress. It was situated in a little valley, almost English in its character, with sleepy cows basking in the meadows, and blackberries—such blackberries as little Rosie screamed at with delight, they were so large and fine—hanging on the hedges, and honeysuckle, sweet as English honeysuckle, perfuming every step of the road. Suddenly they came upon this miniature mediæval castle, with its four towers reflected in the deep clear water of the moat, which they crossed by a draw-bridge—and then were all at once carried from old romance to modern comfort, but picturesque still.

Hannah thought she had never seen a sweeter place. "I only wish I were rich and could buy it. I think I could live content here all my days," said she to the Lyons merchant's wife, whom Madame Arthenay knew, and who, with her black-eyed boy clinging to her gown, politely showed them everything.

"Did you mean what you said?" whispered Bernard eagerly. And then he drew back, and without waiting for her answer, began talking to Madame Arthenay.



That night when he took them safe to the hotel door, he detained Hannah, and asked her if she would not come round the garden with him in the moonlight.

"The air is soft as a summer night;—it will do you no harm. We may have no better chance of talk, and I want to speak to you."

Yet for many minutes he said nothing. The night was so still, the garden so entirely deserted, that they seemed to have for once the world to themselves. In this far-away spot it felt as if they had left all the bitterness of their life behind them—as if they had a right to be lovers, and to treat one another as such. Bernard put his arm round her as they sat, and though there was a solemnity in his caresses, and a tender sadness in her reception of them, which marked them as people who had known sorrow, very different from boy and girl lovers, still love was very sweet—implying deep content, thankful rest.

"Hannah," he said at last, "I have never yet scolded you properly for your running away—with Lady Dunsmore aiding and abetting you. She would scarcely tell me where you were, until I hinted that, as a father, I had a right to get possession of my child. Why did you do such a thing? You must never do it again."

She laughed, but said nothing. In truth, they were both too happy for either anger or contrition.

"Dearest," he whispered, "we must be married. I shall never have any rest till you are wholly and lawfully mine."

"Oh, Bernard! if that could ever be."

"It shall be. I have been talking to Madame Arthenay about it, as Lady Dunsmore charged me to do. She loves you well, Hannah; and the dear old French lady loves you too already. Everybody loves you, and would like to see you happy."

"Happy!" And it seemed as if happiness would never come any nearer to her than now, when she sat as if in a dream, and watched the moon sailing over the sky, just as she had done in her girlhood and ever since, only now she was lonely no more, but deeply and faithfully loved;—loving, too, as she never thought it was in her to love any man. "Happy! I am so happy now that I almost wish I could die."

"Hush!" Bernard said, with a shiver. "Come down from the clouds, my love, and listen to me—to my plain, rough common sense, for two minutes."

Then he explained that the jest about his becoming Monsieur de la Rivière was not entirely a jest—that in talking with Madame Arthenay she had told him how upon giving notice to the French Government, and residing three years in France, he would become a naturalised French citizen, enjoying all the benefits of French laws, including that which, by obtaining a "dispensation"—seldom or never refused—legalises marriage with a deceased wife's sister.

And such a marriage, Madame Arthenay believed, being contracted by them in the character of French subjects, would be held legal anywhere, as her own had been.

A future, the bare chance of which made Hannah feel like a new creature. To be Bernard's happy, honoured wife, Rosie's rightful mother; to enter joyfully upon that life which to every home-loving woman is the utmost craving of her nature; she could hardly believe it true, or that, if possible, it had not been thought of before. Until a sadder thought occurred to her.

"What does 'naturalisation' mean? Becoming a Frenchman?"

"Yes. Also that I must 'change my domicile,' as lawyers call it, publicly and permanently; let it be clearly known that I never mean to live in England again."

"Never again? That would involve giving up much. How much?"

"Everything!" he answered bitterly. "Home, friends, profession, position; all the ambitions I ever had in my life, and I have had some. Still," added he—was it tenderly or only kindly?—as if he feared he had hurt her, "Still, Hannah, I should have you."

"Yes," said Hannah, and fell into deep thought.

How much is a woman to a man—say, the noblest woman to the best and truest man? How far can she replace to him everything, supply everything? A great deal, no doubt; and men in love say she can do all. But is it true? Does after-experience prove it true? And, it must be remembered, that in this case the woman's experience of the man was close, domestic; more like that which comes after marriage than before. She knew Mr. Rivers perfectly well, as a brother, before she ever thought of him as anything else. Loving him, she loved him open-eyed, seeing all his weak as well as his strong points as clearly as he saw hers.

Hannah was neither an over-conceited nor an over-humble person. She knew perfectly well her own deserts and requirements—Bernard's too. She was well aware that the ties of home, of kindred, of old associations, were with him passionately strong. Also, that he was, as he said, an ambitious man; that the world had a larger place in his heart than it had ever had in hers. She began to tremble.

"Tell me," said she, "tell me the exact truth. Do you think you could do this? Would it not be a sacrifice so painful, so difficult, as to be almost impossible?"

"You are right," he answered in a low voice and turning his head away; "I fear it would be impossible."

Hannah knew it, and yet she wished he had not said it. To her, with her ideal of love, nothing, except sin, would ever have been found impossible.

They sat silent awhile. Then Bernard, assuming a cheerful tone, continued—

"But, my dearest, there is a medium course. Why should we not, without being absolutely naturalised, take up our abode in France, where such marriages as ours are universally recognised? We might live here the greater part of the year, and only go to England occasionally. Even then we need not mingle in English society. The curate I have lately taken would be left in charge of my parish, so that I need scarcely ever go to Easterham."

"That means," Hannah said slowly, "that you could never take me to Easterham. Our marriage after all, would be like the other foreign marriages of which we have spoken, which at home are no marriage at all. Abroad, I might be held as your wife; in England I should be only——"

"No, no, no!" broke in Bernard impetuously, "do not wound me by the cruel word. It is not true. People could not be so harsh, so wicked. And if they were, why need we care, when our own consciences are satisfied? Oh, my love, my love, why cannot we be happy? Is it not right to be happy in this short, sad life of ours, which may end at any time? Besides," and his voice altered so that Hannah scarcely knew it, "you are not aware what harm you are doing me. This suspense drives me nearly wild. I can settle to nothing, accomplish nothing. My life is wasting away. I am growing a worse man every day; more unworthy of you, of my child, of"—here he stopped and looked upwards solemnly—"of her whom I never forget, my child's mother. Oh, Hannah, listen to me this once, this last time. Here, where it can so easily be done, marry me. For God's sake marry me—and at once!"

It was an awful struggle. Worse even than that which she had gone through when he was ill, and of which he never knew. The questions she had put to herself then, she repeated now—arguing them over and over with a resolute will, that tried to judge everything impartially, and not with relation to herself at all. Other arguments, too, came back upon her mind, arguments belonging to the great conflict of her youth, of which this one seemed to be such a cruel repetition—with a difference. For the marriage with her cousin would have risked only physical evils, but no moral suffering or social disgrace to any human being; while this marriage, which the law would never recognise as such, risked much more. All her father had then said to her,—her dear dead father, so tender and wise,—of the rights of the unborn generation, of the cruelty of entailing upon them the penalty of our joy, if that can be true joy which is so dearly bought—seemed to return word by word, and burn themselves into her brain. With Rosie even, it might one day be a difficulty—when the young grown-up girl came to discover that her father's wife was not really his wife, but only regarded as such out of courtesy or pity. And—what if Rosie should not always be the only child?

Sitting there, Hannah shuddered like a person in an ague; and then all feeling seemed to leave her, as if she were a dead woman, unconscious of the living arms that were trying to warm her into life.

"You are agitated, my own love!" Bernard whispered. "Take time; do not answer me quickly. Think it well over before you answer at all."

"I have thought it over," said she, looking mournfully in his face, and clinging to his hands, as those cling who know they are putting away from them every happiness of this world. "Not now only, but many a time before, I have asked myself the same question, and found the same answer. No, Bernard, for God's sake, as you say, which includes all other sakes, I will *not* marry you."

Perhaps they ought to have parted then and there,—Hannah thought afterwards it had been better if they had; kinder to him and to herself if she had fled away on the spot, nor remained to have to endure and to remember those bitter words which miserable people speak in haste, and which are so very hard to be forgotten afterwards—words which are heard afterwards like ghostly voices in the silence of separation, making one feel that a parting, if it must be, had better be like an execution—one blow, severing soul and body; then, nothingness.

That nothingness, that quiet death, that absence of all sensation, which she had felt more than once in her life, after great anguish, would have been bliss itself to the feeling which came over her, when having pleaded his utmost, and reproached her his worst, Bernard rose up, to part from her in the soft moonlight of that pleasant garden, as those part who never mean to meet again.

"My wife you must be—or nothing," he had said passionately, and she had answered with an icy conviction that it must be so—that it had best be so. "Yes, that is true; a wife, or nothing." And then the lurking "devil," which we all have in us, liable to be roused on occasion, was roused, and she said a few words which, the next minute, she would have given worlds to have left unsaid. For the same minute there came to him, put into his hands by Madame Arthenay's Jeanne, a letter, an English letter, with a broad black edge.

Bernard took it with a start—not of sorrow exactly, but of shocked surprise.

"I must go home at once. In truth, I ought never to have left home, but I thought of nothing, remembered nothing, except you, Hannah. And this is how you have requited me."

"Hush, and read your letter."

She dared not look over his shoulder and read it with him—dared not even inquire what the sorrow was which she had now no right to share.

Nor did he tell it; but, folding up the letter, stood in deep

thought for a minute or two, then turned to her coldly, as coldly as if she had been any stranger lady, to whom he gave the merest courtesy which ladyhood demanded from a gentleman,—no more.

“I must beg you to make my excuses to Madame Arthenay, and tell her that I am summoned home—I can hardly say unexpectedly, and yet it feels so. Death always feels sudden at last.”

He put his hand over his eyes, as if he were trying to realise something, to collect himself after some great shock. Hannah said a broken word or two of regret, but he repelled them at once.

“No; this death needs no condolence. It is no sorrow—if death ever is a sorrow so bitter as life, which I begin to doubt. But it alters everything for me, and for Rosie. Poor Austin is gone—I am Sir Bernard Rivers.”

Was there pride in his tone—that hard, bitter pride which so often creeps into a heart from which love has been ruthlessly driven? Hannah could not tell; but when they parted, as they did a few minutes after, coldly shaking hands like common acquaintances, she felt that it was really a parting, such an one as they had never had before; a separation of souls, which in all this world might never be united again.

## CHAPTER XVI.

“THIS is the end—the end of all!”

So Hannah said to herself when Bernard had left, and she realised that they had truly parted—parted in anger and coldness, after many bitter words spoken on both sides. She repeated it, morning after morning, as days went wearily by; and no letter came—he who was always so punctual in writing. Evidently then he meant the parting to be final. He had thrust her entirely out of his new life, in which she could henceforward have no part or lot.

This, under the circumstances, was so inevitable, that at first she scarcely blamed him. She only blamed herself for not having long ago foreseen that out of their utterly false position no good end could come; no end but that, indeed, which had come. She had lost him in every relation—as lover—as brother—even as friend. It was sure to be—sooner or later; and yet when the blow did fall, it was a very heavy one; and many times a day she bent under the weight of it in complete abandonment of sorrow.

Not for long, however; women with children cannot afford to grieve for long. The very first morning, when she had to explain to Rosie that papa was gone away home, and would not come back again for a good while (she did it in Grace's presence, who opened wide eyes, but said nothing), there was something in the bright face

of her "sunshiny child" which soothed her pain. And when, in the strange way that children say the most opportune as well as inopportune things, Rosie sidled up to her, whispering, "Tannie not going away and leave Rosie. Tannie never leave Rosie"—she clasped her to her breast in a passion of tenderness, which was only checked by Rosie's distressed discovery of "Tannie tying."

Of course Tannie immediately dried her eyes, and cried no more—in the child's sight, at any rate.

Nor in anybody's sight, for she was one of those who find it not only best, but easiest, to "die and make no sign." Uncovering her wounds would only have made them bleed the more. Besides, what good would it have done? What help could come? Unless the law was altered, the only possibility of marriage for her and Bernard lay in that course which Madame Arthenay had suggested, and which he, with his strong English feeling, and the intensity of all his home affections and associations, had at once set aside as "impossible;" and knowing him as she did, Hannah agreed that it was impossible. But she would not have him judged or criticised by others who knew him less than she. If there was one little sore place in her heart, she would plaister it over—hide it until it was healed.

Therefore, when Madame Arthenay came as usual, she delivered, in carefully-planned phrases, the message Sir Bernard had left; and though the good old lady looked surprised, and evidently guessed—no woman with common womanly penetration could help guessing—that something painful had happened; still, as Hannah said nothing, she inquired nothing, but gave, with a tact and delicacy that won her new friend's love for her whole future life, the best sympathy that even old friends can give sometimes—the sympathy of silence.

They fell back into their old ways, and after a few days, this brief, bright visit of Sir Bernard's might never have been, so completely did it cease to be spoken of. Sometimes in the midst of her innocent play, little Rosie would make a passing reference to "papa," which Aunt Hannah answered with a heart that first leaped wildly, and then sank down, aching with a dull, continual pain. Evidently, not even for his child's sake, would Sir Bernard write to her or have anything to do with her. He had pushed out of his new and prosperous life not only her, but poor Rosie, whom he had left without asking for one good-bye kiss. Even the father in him was destroyed by his wretched position with regard to herself, and would be more and more so as time went on. Perhaps it was better, even for that, that the end had come—that there could be no doubt as to their future relations any more.

She thought so—she forced herself to think so—when at last the long-expected letter arrived. It was very brief; and he used to write whole sheets to her every week! And upon its courteously formal tone could be put but one interpretation.

"MY DEAR HANNAH,—

"I send the usual monthly cheque doubled, that you and my daughter may have every luxury that Avranches affords, and which, indeed, my new circumstances make desirable and necessary.

"If you do not dislike the place, I should like you to winter there; and, with the friendship and protection of good Madame Arthenay, to try and make it your home—as much home as you can.

"I will say no more at present, being fully occupied with family affairs, and with others which time will disclose, but of which I do not wish to speak till they are more matured. In the meantime I remain always

"Your sincere friend,

"BERNARD RIVERS."

That was all. No anger, no reproaches, no love. No, not a particle—of either lover's love or brother's love—of all that she had become so used to, gradually growing and growing, that how she should live on without it she did not know. Kind he was, kind and thoughtful still—it was his nature, he could not be otherwise—but all personal feeling seemed obliterated. It often happens so with men—at least Hannah had heard of such things—when thwarted passion suddenly cools down, like red-hot iron under a stream of water, and hardens into something totally unlike its old self; the impress of which it ever after retains. This is the only way of accounting for many things—especially for one thing which women cannot understand, that sudden marriage after a disappointed love, which is so common and so fatal.

Evidently he could not forgive her; could not restore her to even her old sisterly place with him. He had dropped her as completely out of his life as a weed out of his garden, now only an encumbrance and a reproach.

Well, so it must be. Hannah wondered how she ever could have expected anything else. She felt just a little sorry for herself—in a vague, abstract way—and fancied other people might be too, if they knew it all. Madame Arthenay, unto whom—to save all explanations—she gave Sir Bernard's letter—alas, all the world might have read it!—Lady Dunsmore, whose correspondence was as regular and affectionate as ever, but who now never mentioned the name of Rivers; and, lastly, poor faithful Grace, who followed her mistress with yearning eyes, doing everything that humble devotion could do to give her pleasure or to save her pain, but never saying one single word. These two Pariahs of society—as Hannah sometimes in her heart bitterly called herself and her servant—clung to one another with a silent trust which was a comfort to both.

But their greatest comfort was the child. Rosie flourished like a flower. Every day in her young life brought some new and wonderful

development. That miraculous study of a growing human soul—lay patent before Hannah every day, soothing, calming, and interesting her, till sometimes she became almost reconciled to her pain. It was not the sharp agony of youth—she was accustomed to sorrow—but this sorrow had come too late to be cured. She knew it would not kill her; but she also knew that it would last her life. She had been a long time in loving Bernard; but now that she did love him it was with a depth and intensity which those only know to whom love is the last remnant of that *dolce primavera*—that sweet heart-spring time—after which nothing can be looked for but winter and old age.

She wondered how her years would pass—the years which would make little Rosie into a woman. And she wondered very much about the child, how she should be educated, and where. Sir Bernard only spoke of their wintering at Avranches—having no further plans for Rosie's future; nor had he ever had any that Hannah knew of. He had seemed to take it for granted that they three—she, himself, and the child—would always be together, and that there was no need to decide anything. In what manner he might wish his daughter—an important personage now, as Miss Rivers of the Moat-House—to be brought up, Hannah had not the slightest idea.

However, one day, when they were driving through this smiling Norman country, where the long lines of poplars had not yet dropped a single leaf, and the quaint old trees of the endless apple-orchards stood each with a glowing heap of dropped fruit round its feet, made Rosie clap her hands in delight, the little woman herself settled that question.

“Lots of apples! Rosie likes apples. Rosie stay here always, and get lots of apples.”

A sentence which startled Hannah into deeper and more anxious thought than she had yet expended on her child's future. Truly her child's; she had now none of her own. She never for a moment deceived herself that to her happiness would ever come; that happiness which had fled from her all her life like a beautiful mirage. Only, by the mercy of God, she had been made—as she sometimes thought, with that bitter laugh that is akin to tears—a rugged old camel, who could bear endless burthens, endure weariness and hunger and thirst. The desert would be crossed some day, and she should lie down and rest.

But in the meantime would it be good for Rosie to remain in France, ignorant of her English ties; ignorant, above all, of her father, whom already, with the easy forgetfulness of her age, she seldom spoke about? What seemed at first a relief became to Hannah by-and-by a serious care.

Would she be quite right in binding Sir Bernard to the promise—which she knew he himself would never break—that Rosie should be



with her always? In the years to come might not this deprive both father and daughter of the greatest blessing of their lives?

Hannah remembered—in the utter blotting out of hope it was now doubly sweet to remember—how tenderly she had loved her own father; how after her mother's death she had been his constant companion and friend, with a tie so close that even his disapproval of the attachment between her and Arthur could not break it. This tie—the love between father and eldest daughter—Rosie would in all human probability never know.

Then, too, around Bernard, so young a man still, would soon spring up not only new interests, but new ties. She tried to fancy him Sir Bernard Rivers, master of the Moat-House—and what a noble master he would make!—beloved by all the country-side, bringing to it in due time a new Lady Rivers, fair and sweet as his first wife had been, and perhaps raising up in honour and happiness a numerous family—Rosie's brothers and sisters—to whom poor Rosie would be even less than she was to her father—a stranger, an interloper, unto whom the dear associations of kindred blood were only a name.

Forecasting all this, seeing it with a cruelly clear prevision, as the inevitable result of things, Hannah, even while she clasped her darling to her bosom, sometimes doubted whether hers were not a fatal love, which might one day overcloud, instead of brightening, the future of this her "sunshiny child."

"I may have to do it some time," she said to herself, not daring even in thought to particularise what "it" meant. "But I can't do it yet—not yet. My one blessing—the only bit of blessedness left me in this world!"

And night after night, when she lay listening to the soft breathing, thanking God that her treasure was still hers, close beside her, looking to her, and her alone, for the providing of every pleasure, the defence from every ill that the innocent young life could know, Hannah wetted her pillow with her tears.

"I cannot do it; even if I ought, I cannot," she moaned; and then let the struggle cease. She was not strong enough to struggle now. She rather let herself drift, without oar or sail, just where the waters carried her. Bitter waters they were, but she knew they were carrying her slowly and surely home.

In this dreamy state she remained during the whole of the brief, bright lull of the St. Martin's summer, which lasted longer than usual in Normandy this year, busying herself chiefly in planning pleasures for the two on whom life's burdens had either not yet fallen, or were near being laid down, the old lady and the child. With them, and Grace, she wandered everywhere near Avranches, and made herself familiar with every nook of this pleasant country, which Bernard in his letter had suggested she should try to substitute for "home." Well, what did

it matter? It was little consequence where she and Rosie lived, so that they were far away from him. This must have been what he meant, and she accepted it as such.

With her usual habit of what he had sometimes called "horrid resignation"—she had almost grown fond of the place, and even, in a sense, was happy in it, when one day there arose upon the strange, stupor-like peace of her daily life one of those sudden blasts of fate—like the equinoctial wind in which the St. Martin's summer ended—a storm, noted in this neighbourhood for years, by the destruction which it had spread. Hannah never heard it spoken of afterwards without recalling that particular day, and all that happened thereon.

The hurricane had lasted for twenty-four hours, and was still unabated, when, restless with staying in-doors, she went out. Alone, of course—which was unusual; but any danger there might be must not happen to the child. For herself, she used once rather to enjoy danger, to exult in a high wind, as being something to fight against; but now, when she passed out of the town, and saw the desolation that a few hours had made—tall poplars, snapped like straws, lying prone at the road-side, apple-orchards, in which there was scarcely a tree not mutilated, and many were torn up completely by the roots—she ceased to delight in the storm. She battled with it, however, as long as she could, though it was almost like beating against a stone wall, and then, unable to fight more, she sank, exhausted, in the first sheltered corner she could find.

"How weak I must be growing!" said poor Hannah to herself; and, catching sight of her favourite Mont St. Michel, the solitary rock, with its castled crown, looking seaward over its long stretch of sandy bay, the tears sprang to her eyes. Alas! there was no St. Michael to fight for her—no strong archangel to unsheath his glittering sword in defence of right or in destruction of wrong. She was a lonely woman, with not a creature to defend her—neither father, brother, husband, or lover. Also, she was powerless to defend herself; she knew—she felt—that her fighting days were all done. That ghostly gleam of love and hope which had brightened her life, had passed away even like this St. Martin's summer, in storm and tempest, and would never come back any more.

Tired—so tired that she could scarcely crawl—Hannah retraced her steps, hastening them a little, as she found it was near post-time, and then smiling sadly at herself for so doing. What could the post bring her? Nothing, of course. Her last letter to Sir Bernard, a mere imitation of his own, acknowledging his money—which she had no conscience-stings about taking, for she spent it all upon Rosie—and agreeing to his proposal of their wintering at Avranches, had remained now three weeks unanswered. Better so, perhaps. Total silence was far less painful than such a correspondence.

There was one English letter—for Grace—which, as it bore the Easterham post-mark, she took to her herself, and lingered half involuntarily while it was opened and read.

“No bad news, I trust?”—for Grace had uttered an exclamation, and seemed a good deal disturbed. “No harm happened to—to any one belonging to you?”

For though Grace now seldom mentioned Jem Dixon's name, they both knew that he was still at Easterham, slowly drinking himself to death—partly, he declared, because, since Grace left him, he had such a wretched home. Continually there was the chance of hearing that he had come to some ill end, and Hannah was uncertain how much Grace might feel it, or whether, in that case, she would not desire to go back at once to her sister's children, for whom she had had so strong an affection.

“No, ma'am,” she said, looking at Miss Thelluson half inquisitively, half compassionately, “it's no harm, so to speak, come to anybody. It's only a wedding that they tell me of, a wedding I didn't expect, and I'm very sorry for it.”

“Of some friend or relation of yours? and you don't quite like it, I see? Never mind, it may turn out better than you think; marriages sometimes do, I suppose.”

A commonplace, absently-uttered sentiment; but Hannah was often very absent now. Life and its interests seemed fading daily from her, as from people who are going to die, and from whom, mercifully perhaps, all the outer world gradually recedes, growing indistinct and colourless as at twilight time; but also calm—very calm. She could not rouse herself even into her old quick sympathy with other people's troubles, though she saw that Grace was very much troubled about this letter, and continued so all day. Once upon a time the kind mistress would have questioned her about it, but now she took no notice, not till the two were together in the nursery, sharing the little bit of innocent fun with which Rosie always concluded their day. For Rosie was the drollest little woman at her bed-time, playing such antics in her bath, and carrying on the most amusing conversation while she ate her supper, that neither aunt nor nurse could forbear laughing. But to-night it was different, and the sharp little eyes soon detected that.

“Look, Tannie,” she whispered mysteriously, “Dacie 'tying. Dacie hurt herself p'raps. Poor Dacie 'tying.”

And in truth Grace, who stood behind her mistress and the child, had just wiped her eyes upon the towel she held.

“No; I haven't hurt myself, and it isn't myself I'm crying for. Never mind me, Miss Rosie.”

“But we do mind, don't we?” and Miss Thelluson put her hand kindly on the nurse's shoulder as she knelt. “You shall tell me all about it presently. In the meantime, don't vex yourself more than

you can help. Nothing in life is worth grieving for very much—at least, I often think so." And Hannah sighed. "We have but to do our duty, and be as content as we can. Everything is passing away—soon passing away."

Grace's tears fell only the faster. "It isn't myself, ma'am—oh, please don't think that! I am not unhappy now. You are so kind to me, and then I have Miss Rosie; but what vexes me is this wedding I've heard about, and how people will take it, and——"

"Oh, I dare say it will all come right soon," said Hannah listlessly, rocking her little one in her arms, and feeling that love and lovers and weddings were things belonging to a phase of existence as far back as the world before the flood. "Who may the people be? Anybody I know?"

Grace stopped a minute before she answered, and then said, dropping her eyes, "Is it possible, ma'am, that you don't know?"

"How should I know?"

"I thought—I have been thinking all day, surely he must have told you."

"Who told me?"

"Master—Sir Bernard. It's his wedding that my sister tells me about. Oh, dear! oh, dear!"

All the blood in Hannah's heart stood still. Had it not been for the unmistakable meaning of Grace's sorrow, and the necessity of self-command that it enforced, she might have fainted; but her strong will conquered. She did not "give way," as women call it, by any outward sign.

"Is Sir Bernard married? There must be some mistake. He would, as you say, certainly have told me."

"No; I didn't mean that he was exactly married; but that he is going to be. All the village says it. And to the last person I'd ever have thought he would marry—Miss Alice Melville."

"Hush!" said Hannah, glancing at the child, for Rosie, already growing a dangerous little person to speak before, was listening with all her eyes and ears. Happily, in the silence into which his name had fallen, she had not yet learned to identify "papa" with "Sir Bernard," so that as soon as she had got over her natural indignation at seeing aunt and nurse speaking of something which did not include her, who at this hour especially was always their sole object of attention, she curled sleepily down in Tannie's arms, a round little ball, with the pink toes sticking out from under the white nightgown—begging earnestly for "'Four-and-twenty blackbirds baked in a pie,' "just once, once more."

And Hannah sang it, without a mistake, which the small listener would have detected immediately; without a break in her voice either. For Grace also was listening—Grace who might go back to Easterham any day, and tell Easterham anything. Not that she thought Grace

would; but she might. And now, above all, whatever Easterham guessed, it must never be given the slightest certainty that Sir Bernard had ever been aught to her, except a brother-in-law.

Therefore Hannah laid Rosie peacefully in her crib, going through all the little ceremonies of tucking in and smoothing down, the "one, one more 'ittle song," and the "two tisses," which had been their mutual nightly delight for so long. Then she left her darling happy and at rest, and walked slowly down-stairs, Grace following. Thankfully would she have fled away, and hidden herself anywhere out of sight, but this could not be. So she looked steadily in her servant's face.

"Now, tell me all about this report concerning Sir Bernard."

It was a very natural and probable one, as reports go, and seemed to have been generally accepted at Easterham. The two were continually seen together at the Grange and the Moat-House, and it was said they only waited for their mutual mourning to end, in order to fix their wedding-day. More especially as, many years ago, when they were mere boy and girl, they were supposed to have been fond of one another.

"She was fond of him at any rate," Grace declared. "We servants all thought so when I lived at the Grange. She was a nice, pretty young lady, too. But she isn't young now, of course; not pretty either; only she is very, very good—capital about parish things and so on; and the kindest heart in the world to poor folks' children. She was so kind to mine," added Grace with a sob.

Hannah again laid her hands soothingly on her servant's shoulder, but with a strangely absent look.

"Not young—not pretty—only very good. She would make a good wife to him, no doubt."

"Yes," said Grace, hesitating. "Only—who'd ever have thought of master's wanting her? I didn't, I'm sure. Why, nice as she is, she isn't fit to hold a candle to——"

Hannah stopped her, terrified. "Hush, you forget yourself. Sir Bernard's servant has no right to discuss his future wife. You will displease me exceedingly if you say another word on the subject."

Had there been the slightest betrayal on Hannah's part, the poor nurse's heart would have overflowed. As it was, she was simply bewildered.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Thelluson. Us poor servants have no right, I suppose, to be sorry for our betters. But I was sorry, many a time, because I thought——"

"Think nothing at all, say nothing at all, either to me or to any one. My sister has been dead three years; her husband is at perfect liberty to marry again as soon as he chooses. And he could hardly marry a better person than Miss Melville. I am—very glad."

"Are you?" said Grace, looking at her very earnestly. And then

Hannah, driven to bay, and feeling the fierce necessity of the moment, looked back at Grace and, almost for the first time in her life, acted a lie.

"Certainly. Why should I not be glad of my brother-in-law's marriage?"

There was no answer, of course. Grace, completely puzzled, ventured no more; but putting the letter in her pocket, begged pardon once again, and, sighing, went away.

So far, then, Hannah was safe. She had borne the blow—nor allowed her servant to suspect what a death-blow it was; nay, she had even succeeded in concealing the fact that it had come upon her unawares. Poor innocent hypocrite! the lessons taught by the last bitter year and a half had not been lost upon her. But when Grace was gone she sat utterly paralysed.

Over and over again she had repeated to herself that all was at an end between her and Bernard; but she had never contemplated such an end as this. So sudden too—scarcely six weeks from the time she had parted from him—when he had been her ardent, despairing, desperate lover; furious because she would not sacrifice everything for him, as he said he was ready to do for her. And now he was quite ready to marry another woman. Could it be true? Was it probable—possible?

Something in Hannah's secret heart whispered that it was; that his impulsiveness of temperament, his extreme affectionateness and corresponding need of affection, made a hasty marriage like this, to one whom he knew well, and who had always been fond of him, not incomprehensible even to her. And yet—and yet—

"He might have waited—just a little while; have mourned for me just for a few weeks—a few months—as he did for my poor Rosa!"

And her tears dropped fast—fast; not the scalding tears of youth, but very bitter tears nevertheless. She had loved him so well, had endured so much for him, had had such a bright dream of what she was to him. Could it have been only a dream? Would any other woman be just as dear to him as she? And though she did not faint, or shriek, or moan, or do any of those desperate things which tragic heroines are supposed to indulge in upon hearing of the marriage of their lovers; though she went to bed and slept, and rose next morning just as if nothing had happened, still Hannah felt that something had happened—something which would make the world look never quite the same as it looked yesterday.

That yesterday was the last day she crossed the threshold for two whole weeks. The doctor said she ought not to have gone out in the high wind; that, out of health as she was before, it had caught her in some way, affected her breathing, smitten her at her heart. At which Miss Thelluson smiled. She knew she was "smitten to the heart."

But it was very convenient—this illness. It saved her from all need of physical exertion, even of talking. [She could just turn her face to the wall, and lie quiet, and do nothing. She felt for the first time in her life not the slightest inclination to do anything. Even when she rose from her bed the same incapacity continued, till sometimes Rosie's innocent prattle was almost too much for her, and she felt herself turning sick and faint; and saw, with a dread indescribable, Madame Arthenay or Grace carry the child away from her, and keep her out of her sight for hours at a time.

What if, by-and-by, this were to be constantly the case? What if this condition of hers was the forerunner of long and serious illness—perhaps the consumption which was said to be in the family, though in this generation her cousin Arthur had been its only victim? Suppose she were to fall sick and die? She began to have a feeling—was it sweet or sad?—that she *could* die, and that of mere sorrow. And, then, what would become of the child?

"Oh, my Rosie, if ever there should come a time when you were left forlorn with nobody to love you, when you might blame poor Tannie for having stolen you and kept you away from all those who might have loved you! If ever Tannie should die!"

"Tannie die? What's dat? Rosie don't like it!" said the little thing, to whom she had been talking. She had two ways of talking to her darling. One which Rosie could perfectly comprehend: long conversations about flowers, and beasts, and people, and things, and all sorts of subjects in which the child's intelligence was receptive to a degree that sometimes utterly amazed the grown woman. The other was a trick she had of speaking simply for her own relief, in a fashion that Rosie could not comprehend at all. But, baby as she was, she comprehended the anxious face, the tremulous voice; and repeated, with that pathetic droop of the lips that always foreboded tears, "Rosie don't like it."

Hannah changed her tone immediately. "Come here, my pet, Tannie won't die then. She couldn't afford it just yet. But listen a minute. Would Rosie like to go and see papa? Be papa's girl again, and play about in the pretty garden, and the greenhouse, and the nursery? Rosie remembers them all?"

"Yes," said the little decisive voice—Rosie never had the slightest doubt in her own baby mind about anything. "Rosie will go and see papa—soon, very soon. Tannie come too."

Hannah turned way, and could not answer at first. Then she said, "But perhaps Tannie might not come too. Rosie would be content with papa?"

"No,"—there was entire decision in this likewise—"Rosie not go to papa unless Tannie come too. Rosie don't want papa. Rosie will stop with Tannie."

And the little woman, squatting down on Tannie's pillow with an

air of having quite settled the whole affair, turned her whole undivided attention to a doll, whose eyes would open and shut, and who was much more interesting to her than any papa in the world.

But Rosie's unconscious words aroused in her aunt a dread that had once awakened and been silenced: the fear that as time went on this complete severance would produce its natural result; the child would become indifferent to the father, and the father to the child. For, let people talk as they will about the ties of blood, it is association which really produces the feeling which is termed "natural affection." Deprived of this, and then deprived of herself, Rosie might in a few years be left as lonely a creature, save for money, as her Aunt Hannah once had been—ay, and was now, save for this one darling, the sole treasure saved out of her wrecked life. But, was it lawfully and righteously hers?

There is a story, I believe a true one—most women will feel that it might have been true—of a Highland mother, who, travelling from one glen to another, was caught in a snow-storm, and lost for twenty-four hours. When found—that is, her body was found—she had stripped off everything but her shift to cover the child. It was alive still, just alive; but the mother, of course, was dead.

Hannah Thelluson, as she lay awake all through this night, the first night that they brought back Rosie's crib to its old place by her bedside—for she insisted she should sleep better if they did so—was not unlike that poor Highland woman.

Next morning she said, in a quiet, almost cheerful tone, "Grace, do you think you could pack up all our things in a day? For I want, if possible, to go back to England to-morrow."

"Go back to England!"

"Yes. What do you say to that, Rosie?" fixing her eyes on the child's face; and then, as a sudden gush blinded them, turning away, and contenting herself with feeling the soft cheeks and the rings of silky hair—as that Highland mother might have done when the death-mists were gathering over her eyes. "Will Rosie go back, and see papa? and be papa's own little girl again? Papa will be so fond of her."

"Yes," assented the little oracle, and immediately proved her recollection of her father, and her lively appreciation of his paternal duties, by breaking her doll's head against the bed-post, and then saying in a satisfied tone, "Never mind. All right. Rosie take dolly to papa. Papa will mend it!"

In a week from that time, travelling as fast as her strength allowed, yet haunted by a vague dread that it would not last her till she reached England, Hannah arrived in London.

Only in London, at an hotel; for she had no house to go to—no friend. Lady Dunsmore happened to be at a country seat; but, even if not, it would have been all the same. What she had to do no one



could help her in—no one could advise her upon; it must be solely between herself and Bernard. And the sooner it was done the better. She felt this; more and more every hour. The struggle was growing frightful.

"I was right," she said to herself, when, as soon as the need for exertion was over, she sank, utterly exhausted, and was obliged to leave to Grace the whole charge of everything, including the child, and lie, listening to the roll of endless wheels below the hotel window—as ceaseless as the roar of the sea, and as melancholy—"I was quite right! It is best to resign everything. I cannot trust myself any more."

The first minute that her hands ceased from shaking, she wrote the decisive letter.

"DEAR FRIEND," (she first put "Bernard," then "brother," finally "friend." He was that still; at least she had never given him cause to be the contrary) "I have, against your wish, returned to England, though only for a few days' stay, in consequence of having accidentally discovered the matter, to which I suppose your last letter referred; though, as you have never plainly told me, I will not refer to it here. But I think it ought to modify our future arrangements; which I should like to talk over with you. If you will come and see me here, me and Rosie, half an hour would, I think, suffice to decide all, and I could go back to France at once.

"I remain, with every wish for your happiness in your new life,

"Your affectionate friend,

"HANNAH THELLUSON."

After that she had nothing more to do but to wait, and watch day darken into night, and night brighten back into day—the dreary London day, all loneliness and noise—till Sir Bernard came.

He came, earlier than she could have believed it possible. He must at once have taken a night train from Easterham, which he owned he had; but, though he looked very tired, he was neither so agitated nor so confused as he might naturally have been under the circumstances.

"Why in the world did you take such a journey, Hannah?" was all he said, on entering; then, perceiving Grace and the child, he stepped back, and caught his little daughter in his arms.

"My pretty one! Run away, nurse, and leave her to me. I want to have her all to myself. What, Rosie! Has she forgotten papa? Two tisses!—lots of tisses! Papa's darling! Papa's lamb!"

Of one thing Hannah was certain, Sir Bernard was unfeignedly glad to see his child. No lack of fatherly love, even though he was going to be married. It gave that poor heart which he had forsaken, a thrill of joy to see how tenderly he caressed his little "lamb"—the

motherless lamb, that might have perished but for her, and which her care had now nurtured into a creature that, among any number of children, would be always the flower of the flock, so pretty had she grown, so winning, so clever, and, withal, such a good and loving child. Any father might be proud of Rosie. And as she clung about Sir Bernard, remembering all his old tricks with her, as if they had only parted last week, the two seemed perfectly happy together, and even like one another—with that strange family likeness which comes and goes in little faces, but which Hannah saw now as she had never seen before. Yes, Rosie was decidedly like him, and they would grow up to be a true father and daughter—one of the dearest and sweetest bonds that human nature can know.

She had quite forgotten herself—a trick she had, poor Hannah! in watching them and speculating upon them and their future—when she felt both her hands taken, one by her child's soft little fingers, the other by the strong clasp of a man.

"Hannah! can you forgive me? I have sometimes feared you never would?"

"What for?"

"For my unreasoning anger—my frantic love; above all, for having asked of you a sacrifice which no man should ask or accept from any woman. I knew this, felt it, the instant I came to my right senses, which was as soon as ever you were out of my sight; but it was too late to tell you so—— Forgive me! You will have no need to forgive me anything again."

"I know that," said Hannah slowly, and waited for the next words he would say—words which would surely be confirmation of all she had heard. So sure was she of it, that she did not withdraw her hand; she even, seeing that his manner was not agitated, but even cheerful, began to think whether now it would not be possible to go back, in degree, to their old cordial relations; whether he could not be again her brother-in-law—and Alice Melville's husband. Still, something in her manner seemed to startle him.

"Know? What can you know? Not, surely, anything about these future plans of mine, which, for both our sakes, I have carried out, unknown to you, until now?"

"Nevertheless, I have found them out," said Hannah, with a faint smile. "In these things, you see, a bird of the air often carries the matter. I am aware of it all."

"Of it all? Who could have told you? And what?"

"That you are going to be married."

Sir Bernard started; then half smiled. But he offered not the slightest contradiction.

Hannah, perfectly convinced, conscious of only one wild impulse to get through what she had to say, that it might be all over and done, went on speaking.

"Married, as I hear, to Alice Melville, which is a choice that must satisfy everybody. That is the reason I came back to England. She is a good woman, who would be a good mother to my child. And I feel very weak and ill. I have been ill——"

"My poor Hannah! And you never told me?"

"Why should I? I only tell you now because it frightens me about Rosie's future. She ought to have safer protection than mine. She ought to have a brighter life than any I can give her. So I came to say"—Hannah drew her breath hard and fast—"if you want her back, I will give her up—to you and Alice. Only, first—I must speak to Alice—must make her promise——"

Just then tiny fingers ringed themselves round Hannah's cold hand, against which Rosie laid her cheek, in a caressing way she had. It was too much—the strong heart altogether gave way, and she sat down sobbing.

Sir Bernard had listened, quite confounded at first, then silently watched her.

"Oh Hannah, you good, good woman!" was all he said, and taking out of her arms little Rosie, now sobbing as piteously as she, disappeared from the room with the child.

Then it was really true, this marriage: he did not deny it. And he accepted her sacrifice of her darling. Well, once made, she could not retract it, even had she desired to do so. But she did not desire. She only wished to see Rosie safe, and then go away and die. This once, once more, for the last time in her life, she accepted the inevitable. It was God's will, and it must be.

Long before Sir Bernard came back she had dried her eyes, and waited, as she thought she ought to wait, for anything he had to say—any final arrangements they might require to make. There was a chair opposite, but he sat down beside her, and took her hand.

"Hannah, I want to speak half-a-dozen quiet words to you, which I should not have said till spring; but I had better say them now. It is quite true I am going to be married, and as soon as I possibly can. I am not fitted for a lonely life. Mine will be worthless to myself, my fellow-creatures, my God, unless I accept the blessing He offers me, and marry the woman I love. But that woman is—not Alice Melville."

"Not Alice Melville!"

"How could you ever think it was? She is very good, and we are fast friends—indeed, she has advised with me in all my plans, and we have been very much together of late, which may account for this report. How could you believe it?" and he smiled—his old, winning, half-mischievous smile. "As Rosie would say,—by-the-bye, how she has grown, that dear little girl of ours,—'papa don't like it.'"

Hannah had borne sorrow—but she could not bear joy; she was

too weak for it. Her lips tried to speak ; and failing that, to smile ; but it was in vain. She sank, quite insensible, in Bernard's arms.

It was a good many hours before she was able to hear those "half-a-dozen quiet words" which were to change the whole current of her life—of both their lives.

The plan which Madame Arthenay had first suggested, of naturalising himself in France, changing his domicile, and marrying as a French citizen, according to French law, had, immediately after his parting from Hannah, recurred again and again to Sir Bernard's mind as the only solution of their difficulty. On consulting the Dunsmares on the subject, they also had seen the matter in the same light. Though session after session Lord Dunsmore determined to bring forward his favourite Bill, still, years might elapse before it was passed and became law, and until then there was no hope of marriage in England for Hannah and Bernard.

"You mustn't ask it—or desire it," said Lady Dunsmore, ignorant—and she always remained ignorant—that he ever had asked it. "A woman like her would never consent. And she is right. To break your country's laws, however unjust they may be, and then expect its protection, is like disobeying one's father. We must do it—if compelled by his unjust exactions—but we ought to quit his house first."

So there was no alternative but for Sir Bernard to make the sacrifice—as hard for him as Hannah's renunciation of Rosie had been for her—and give up England for ever. His profession likewise—since no man with a conscience could break the canon law, and yet remain a clergyman.

"And I have a conscience, though they do not think so at the Moat-House," said he, faintly smiling. That smile and his worn looks alone betrayed to Hannah the sufferings he must have gone through in making up his plans—now all decided—and set in train. In fact he had already renounced everything, and prepared himself to begin a new career in a foreign land.

"I can do it, in one sense," he continued, "easier than most men—because of my large private fortune. I mean to buy the Château St. Roque, which you liked so much. Did you not say you could cheerfully spend your whole life there? Perhaps you may."

Hannah smiled ; and there came across her memory a trembling flash of that pleasant place—with the four towers looking at themselves in the water, and the green upland-gardens and meadows on either hand.

"Yes," she whispered, "we could be very happy there. It would not be so very dreadful to live in France, would it?"

"At least, we must not say so to our good friend, Madame Arthenay, or to our new compatriots. And I hope I am not so very insular as to see charms in no country except my own. Besides, am I not re-planting my family tree where its old roots came from?"

Who knows? Years hence I may revive the glory of my Norman ancestors by making a speech, in my very best French, before the Chamber of Deputies. What say you, Hannah? Shall we shake British dust entirely off our feet, and start afresh as Monsieur and Madame de la Rivière? Great fun that!"

The boyish phrase—and the almost boyish laugh that accompanied it—comforted Hannah more than he knew. Heavy as his heart was now, and sore with his hard renunciations, there was in him that elastic nature which, grief once overpast, refuses to dwell upon it—but lives in the present and enjoys the future. And he was still young enough to have a future—to open up new paths for himself, and carry them out nobly; to live in content and die in honour, even though it was far away from the dear England where he was born.

"But it costs you so much—ah, so much!" said Hannah mournfully.

"Yes, but I have counted the cost; and—if you will not scold me for saying so—I think you worth it all. Many men become voluntary exiles for the sake of wealth, convenience, or whim: why should not I for love? Love—which is duty also, when one is loved back again."

Hannah smiled, knowing he was one of those whom it makes, not conceited or tyrannical, but strong and happy, to be loved back again.

"Besides," he continued, "I have not much love to leave behind: my sisters are all married—Bertha will be next spring. No one will miss me; nor perhaps shall I soon come to miss anything—except a few graves in Easterham Churchyard."

He stopped, and that last bitterness of exile—the clinging to the very sod of one's own land, the sod which covers our dead—came over him, sad and sore. Those graves—buried in them lay all his childhood, his youth, his brief happy married life with the wife, whom—though he seldom spoke of her now—Hannah knew he had no more forgotten than she had forgotten her lost Arthur. Time had healed all wounds; life, and its duties, had strengthened them both—strengthened them into that calm happiness which sometimes, after much sorrow, God sees fit to send, and which it is good to accept and be thankful for. But—as for forgetting!—She said nothing, only drew Bernard's head softly to her shoulder, and let him weep there the tears of which no man need be ashamed.

By-and-by she asked about Bertha's marriage, which was to a gentleman in the neighbourhood whom she had refused several times, but accepted at last. He was very rich, if not very clever or very wise.

"Still, she might have done worse. He is a good fellow, and we all like the match, except, perhaps, Melville, who speaks sharply about it sometimes; but Bertha only laughs at him, and says she shall please herself in spite of brothers-in-law."

Hannah looked keenly at Bernard while he spoke ; but he did so in utter unsuspectingness. Evidently he had never guessed, in the smallest degree, the secret grief of his sister Adeline, the canker of her married life, that jealousy of her sister, from which all the restrictions of the law could not save her, no more than the terror of the Divorce Court can save poor miserable souls to whom vice is pleasanter than virtue. But to this right-minded, honest man, entrenched within the sacredness of a happy marriage, the one idea would have been almost as untenable as the other. Hannah was certain that, dearly as Bernard loved her now, had Rosa lived she might have come about their house continually, and he would have had no sort of feeling for her beyond the affectionate interest that a man may justly take in his wife's sister, or cousin, or friend—the honourable chivalric tenderness for all women, which only proves how deeply the one woman he has chosen is enshrined in his heart.

So what he had never once suspected she never told him—and no one else was ever likely to do so. Adeline's sufferings were buried with her. So best.

"And now," said Sir Bernard, "I must say good-bye. And I shall not see you again till we meet on board the Havre steamer to-morrow."

For he had arranged already that she should go back at once—avoiding the very appearance of evil—and remain with Madame Arthenay until he came to marry her, which, if possible, should be in spring.

"I shall come, like Napoleon, with the violets, and by then we must have these thin cheeks rounded, and these grave eyes looking as bright and merry as Rosie's. I used to say, you know, there was no telling which was most of a baby, Tannie or Rosie. By-the-bye, she must cease to say 'Tannie' and learn to say 'mamma.'"

Hannah burst into tears.

"Yes, there is one thing I am not afraid of," said she, when her full heart had a little relieved itself of its felicity. "I know I shall be a good mother to your child. What I am afraid of is whether I shall be a sufficiently good wife to you. You might have married almost any woman you liked—young, rich, pretty ; whilst I—look here, Bernard."

She lifted up her hair, and showed him the long stripes of grey already coming — faster than ever since the trouble of the last two years ; but he only kissed the place, repeating Cowper's lines, which he reminded her they had often read together in those long quiet evenings which would all come back again, when the one deep and lasting bliss of married life, companionship, would be theirs without alloy—companionship, which even in friendship alone, without marriage, had been so sweet:—

"Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,  
Are still as lovely to my sight  
As golden beams of orient light—  
My Mary."

"No, Hannah," he said, "I am not afraid—neither of our new life nor of ourselves. I know what a man marries a woman for—not for this beauty or that, this quality or that peculiarity; but because she suits him, sympathises with him, is able to make of him a better man than he ever was before—as you have made me. If I had let you go, I should have been not only a coward, but a fool. I take you just as you are, 'with all your imperfections on your head,' as I hope you will take me."

"Yes," she said laughing, though the tears were in her eyes.

"Very well, then. Let us be content."

He put his arms about her, and stood looking deep down into her eyes. He was much handsomer than she, brighter and younger-looking; yet there was something in Hannah's face which, with all its handsomeness, his had not—a certain spiritual charm which, when a man once recognises in a woman is an attraction as mysterious as it is irresistible—makes him crave for her, as the one necessity of his existence, risk everything in order to win her, and having won her, love her to the last with a passion that survives all change, all decay. What this charm was, probably Bernard himself could not have told; but Lady Dunsmore, speaking of Hannah, once characterised it as being "a combination of the angel and the child."

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## CHAPTER XVII.

THERE is a picture familiar to many, for it was in the Great Exhibition of 1851, and few stopped to look at it without tears—"The Last Look of Home," by Ford Madox Browne. Merely a bit of a ship's side—one of those emigrant ships such as are constantly seen at Liverpool, or other ports whence they sail—with its long rows of dangling cabbages, and its utter confusion of cargo and passengers. There, indifferent to all, and intently gazing on the receding shore, sit two persons—undoubtedly a man and his wife—emigrants—and bidding adieu to home for ever. The man is quite broken-down; but the woman, sad as she looks, has hope and courage in her face. Why not? In one hand she firmly clasps her husband's—the other supports her sleeping babe. *She* is not disconsolate, for she carries her "home" with her.

In the picture the man is—not at all like Bernard, certainly; but the woman is exceedingly like Hannah—in expression at least—as she sat on the deck of the French steamer, taking her last look of

dear old England, with its white cliffs glimmering in the moonlight—fainter and fainter every minute—across the long reach of Southampton Water.

Bernard sat beside her—but he too was very silent. He meant to go back again as soon as he had seen her and Rosie and Grace safely landed at Havre; but he knew that to Hannah this farewell of her native land was, in all human probability, a farewell “for good.”

Ay, for good—in the fullest sense; and she believed it; believed that they were both doing right, and that God’s blessing would follow them wherever they went; yet she could not choose but be a little sad; until she felt the touch of the small, soft hand which now, as ever, was continuously creeping into Tannie’s. Then she was content. If it had been God’s will to give her no future of her own at all, she could have rested happily in that of the child and the child’s father.

It happened to be a most beautiful night for crossing—the sea calm as glass, and the air mild as summer, though it was in the beginning of November. Hannah could not bear to go below, but with Rosie and Grace occupied one of those pleasant cabins upon deck—sheltered on three sides, open on the fourth. There, wrapped in countless rugs and shawls, Rosie being in an ecstasy at the idea of going to bed in her clothes, “all under the tars” (“s” was still an impossible first consonant to the baby tongue), she settled down for the night, with her child in her arms, and her faithful servant at her feet.

Sir Bernard made them all as comfortable and warm as he could—kissed his child, and Hannah too, in Grace’s presence. For he had himself informed the nurse how matters stood, and told her that in his house she should have a home for life, in a country where marriages such as hers were considered honourable, natural, and right. Then he bade them all good night, and went to the cabin below.

Hannah could not sleep; but she rested, quiet and happy. Even happiness could not make her physically strong; but she left all her days to come in God’s hands—to be many or few, as He thought best. The others fell sound asleep, one at her bosom, the other at her feet; but she lay wide awake, listening to the lap-lap of the water against the boat, and watching the night sky, so thick with stars. At length the moon came too, and looked in upon them like a sweet calm face, resembling a dead face, in its unchangeable peace; so much so, that when Hannah dropped at last into a confused doze, she dreamt it was the face of her sister Rosa, smiling down out of heaven upon them all.

When she woke it was no longer moonlight, but daylight, at least daybreak; for she could discern the dark outline of the man at the wheel, the only person on deck. The boat seemed to be passing, swiftly and silently as a phantom ship through a phantom ocean; she hardly knew whether she was awake or asleep, dead or alive, till she



felt the soft breathing of the child in her arms, and, with a passion of joy remembered all.

A few minutes after, Hannah, raising her head as high as she could without disturbing Rosie, saw a sight, which she never saw before, and never in all her life may see again, but will remember to the end of her days.

Just where sea and sky met, was a long, broad line of most brilliant amber, gradually widening and widening, as the sun lifted himself out of the water and shot his rays, in the form of a crown, right up into the still dark zenith. Then, as he climbed higher, every floating cloud—and the horizon seemed full of them—became of a brilliant rose-hue, until the whole heaven blazed with colour and light. In the midst of it all, dim as a dream, but with all these lovely tints flitting over it, Hannah saw, far in the distance, the line of the French shore.

It was her welcome to her new country and new life—the life which was truly like being born again into another world. She accepted the omen ; and, clasping her child to her bosom, closed her eyes and praised God,

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All this happened long ago, and Monsieur and Madame de la Riviere have never returned to England. They still inhabit the Château de Saint Roque, beloved and honoured far and wide in the land of their adoption ; and finding after all that the human heart beats much alike, whether with French blood or English, and that there is something wonderfully noble and lovable about that fine old Norman race which (as Madame Arthenay long delighted in impressing upon her dear neighbours, and upon the many English friends who visited them in their pleasant foreign home) once came over and conquered, and civilised, us rude Saxons and Britons.

Whether the master and mistress of Saint Roque will ever return to England, or whether little Austin, the eldest of their three sons, —Rosie is still the only daughter—will ever become not only the heir of their French estates and name, but one day Sir Austin Rivers of the Moat-House, remains to be proved. At any rate, they mourn little after that old home, being so thoroughly happy in their new one—as those deserve to be who have sacrificed for one another almost everything except what they felt to be right. But they are happy, and what more can they or any one desire ?







